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SABLE ISLAND,
ITS
HISTORY AND PHENOMENA.

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I.—Sable Island: Its History and Phenomena.

By the Rev. GEORGE PATTERSON, D.D.

(Read May 25, 1894.)

I. DESCRIPTION OF THE ISLAND.

From the great bank of Newfoundland westward, off the south coast of Nova Scotia, almost to the shores of the United States, the ocean-bed presents a series of shoals or banks, composed of sand, pebbles and fragments of shells and corals, with a depth of water on them of from thirty to seventy fathoms, and varying in extent from fifteen or twenty miles to nearly three hundred in length, with proportionate breadth.

One of the largest of these submarine sand-beds is Sable island bank, two hundred miles in length from east to west, and about ninety in breadth from north to south. The summit or apex of this, being raised above the water, forms Sable island, so long the terror of navigators, and associated with so many sad recollections. It is situated about eighty-five miles from Whitehead, the nearest point on the Nova Scotia shore, in a southeasterly direction. It is now less than twenty miles long, by about one mile wide, and the east end is in latitude $43^{\circ} 59'$ north and in longitude $59^{\circ} 45'$ west. By Capt. Bayfield's survey, in 1851, the west end was in latitude $45^{\circ} 56'$ north and longitude $60^{\circ} 08'$ west, and this is still given as its position. But some miles have been carried away from the point, leaving its longitude somewhat less. It forms two parallel ridges of loose gray sand, in a bow or crescent shape, with the inner side to the north. In the valley between these is a lake, now not more than eight miles long, formerly nearly twice that length.

Approaching it from the north, it exhibits a range of small sand dunes at the west end about twenty feet high, eastward rising to a height of eighty, and then falling away toward the east end. As the island is thus comparatively low, is perfectly treeless, and in colour presents no marked contrast with the surrounding waters, it proves a snare to navigators, who have often sailed directly for it, till brought to a sense of their danger by the sight of the signal staff of one of the stations.

From the west point stretches northwesterly a bar, which is dry in ordinary weather for one and a-half miles, nearly so for another mile, then extends nine miles over which the sea breaks at all times, and still seven miles farther over which it breaks in heavy weather, and at all times shows a great ripple and cross seas, the whole being thus seventeen miles in length. From the east end a similar bar stretches northeasterly for seventeen miles, of which the first four are dry in fine weather, the next nine covered with heavy breakers, and the last four with a heavy cross sea. Thus the island and its bars present in stormy weather a continuous line for upwards of fifty miles of terrific breakers.

Besides these bars, at each extremity of the island there are three shoals or ridges paral-

lel with the shore on each side, over which the sea breaks heavily, when there is any sea running, rendering landing with boats difficult and often dangerous.

These bars are more dangerous than the island itself. If a vessel strikes on the latter, those on board may be saved, as, commonly, she will not break up for two or three days. But, in bad weather, the rescue of a vessel striking on one of the bars is impossible. Their sides are somewhat steep, thirty fathoms of water being found on the north side of the east bar and as much as one hundred and seventy off its eastern extremity, so that a few minutes after finding no soundings a vessel may strike, and then, forging over, be entirely engulfed in the waters beyond. After a gale or foggy weather some wreckage or bodies drifting ashore will be the only memorial of such an event. The wrecks that have taken place on the island since the founding of the relief establishment in 1801 are known and recorded, but they are supposed to be considerably exceeded in number by the unknown.

On the south side the water deepens gradually, and such is the swell and the distance to be traversed, that landing is attempted only after a succession of northerly winds and in fine weather. Hence vessels seldom anchor on this side. On the north vessels anchor from one to two miles off, where there is good holding-ground of fine sand, but if the wind arises from the north they must put to sea. Landing can only be effected after a continuance of fine weather, and with the wind off shore. Even in such favouring circumstances it is seldom attempted but in the surf-boats belonging to the station on shore.

Another circumstance greatly increasing the danger connected with the island is the strength and irregularity of the currents. Of three of these it seems to be the centre and meeting place. On the south the gulf stream passes it on its eastward course. Then, of the great Arctic current, the main portion, passing down the east coast of Labrador and Newfoundland till it reaches the great bank of Newfoundland, is there deflected to the west, and vessels are carried forward so rapidly that sometimes they are upon Sable island before those on board are conscious of their danger.¹ Another portion of this current, passing through the straits of Belleisle, being joined by the outflow of the St. Lawrence, passes down the east coast of Cape Breton, and, meeting the last mentioned, is deflected westward to the shores of this island. From these, and perhaps other causes, the currents round the island are terribly conflicting and uncertain, sometimes being in the opposite direction to the prevailing winds, and sometimes passing round the whole circuit of the compass in twenty-four hours. As currents of water like currents of air meeting from different directions, produce eddies, these produce marvellous swirls round the island. An empty cask will be carried round and round the island, making the circuit several times, and the same is the case with bodies from wrecks.

Nor are these all the dangers which beset the mariner in the neighbourhood of this ill-fated isle. Fogs of a density rarely experienced elsewhere prevail at all seasons of the year. Then the northern edge of the gulf stream is noted for the severity of its storms. Mr. Maury says that the most terrific storms that rage on the ocean have been known to spend their fury on its northern border. The suddenness with which they arise and their awful violence are among the most striking phenomena of the island.

¹ Capt. Darby, a former superintendent on the island, thus writes to 'Blunt's Coast Pilot': "The most of the wrecks occurring here arise from error in longitude. I have known vessels from Europe that had not made an error of one-half degree in their longitude till they came to the banks of Newfoundland, and from there, in moderate weather and light winds, have made errors from sixty to one hundred miles." This shows the strength of the current westerly.

"The sun often rises clear, giving indications of continued good weather, and with the exception of the sea breaking high on the bars, and the fretful moan of the surf as it breaks along the shore, there is no premonition of the coming storm. Suddenly a dull, leaden haze obscures the sun, clouds gather from all directions. The sky assumes a wild, unusual appearance. The wind begins to rise in fitful gusts, carrying swirls of sand before it. The darkness increases as the low, driving scud shuts in all distant objects. Now the gale bursts in awful fury, whipping off the summits of the hummocks, carrying before it a cloud of blinding sand-drift. Darkness adds to the horror of the scene, while the rain descends in a perfect deluge. No human voice can be heard above the tempest. The crinkled lightning for an instant lights up the mad waves, as they rear and leap along the beach. Then a sudden calm ensues—as strange as calm. A few short gusts at first break this period of tranquillity, and in a few minutes the hurricane bursts again from the opposite quarter. The darkness is still intense, relieved only by the red glare of the lightning, which is quickly followed by the crashing of the thunder, as it strives to be heard above the howling of the blast. Gradually the storm ceases, the clouds break and pack away in dense black masses to leeward, and the sea alone retains its wild tumult."¹

The more violent of these strike the boldest with awe, if not with terror. The full force of the Atlantic beating upon a shore of fifty miles seems to cause the earth to quiver to its foundations, while the inhabitants tremble at the fury of the wind, which seems likely to hurl their dwellings into the seething ocean.

One of the most striking phenomena connected with the island is the phosphorescent light of the sea, of which there are here sometimes the most magnificent displays. The ocean will appear at times to be in a blaze, or, when the sea breaks high, it will rise as a great fire, it may be to the height of fifteen or twenty feet.

At times the weather is so calm and the sea so still that a lad might land in a flat, but again, when the wind is high, landing is not attempted; but even in ordinary weather it is a work of difficulty and sometimes of danger.

As the visitor lands he sees here the shore cut by the sea into sand-cliffs, and there a sloping expanse of sand defended by a sea-beach. As he turns his eyes to the right or left he sees relics of wreck—here it may be the remains of some gallant mast, or there a ship's timbers standing ghastly out of the sand like ribs of some huge skeleton. Proceeding onward he mounts a ridge of sand, here blown into hills, there scooped into bowl-like hollows, here without vegetation, but as he advances covered with coarse grass mixed with wild peas. Descending into the central valley, he finds a soil of black, peaty texture to the depth of fifteen or eighteen inches. In several places there are fresh-water ponds, formed by the rain-water in hollows scooped out in the sand by the wind. It may be mentioned that fresh water is found anywhere in the sand by digging to the depth of about eighteen inches.² In the interior around the lake are seen wild roses, asters and lilies, and abundance of strawberries, blueberries and cranberries, the latter forming an article of export of some importance.

Wild ducks remain on the island all the year round, the most common being the black duck and the sheldrake. Numbers are shot to supply the tables of the residents, and their

¹ "Sable Island, and its Attendant Phenomena," by S. D. McDonald, 'Transactions of N. S. Institute of Science,' vi., 29.

² Sir William Dawson ("Acadian Geology," page 37) supposes that this is from rain-water, which floats on a subsoil soaked with water from the ocean.

eggs are sometimes collected in their season. Gulls, divers and other wild fowl arrive in May, and their eggs may be gathered, we might say, by the boat-load. Quantities of them are sometimes collected for use or export. Plovers and curlew, during their autumn migrations, appear in large numbers, as formerly did the wild pigeon. A species of sparrow is abundant, remaining the year round. Stray specimens of the land-birds common on the continent may sometimes be seen. Two species of snipe, however, breed on the island.

The walrus was formerly found here, doubtless brought by the Arctic current, but it has long since been extinct, though their tusks are still found in the sand. Seals still resort hither. They are of two species, the large gray or Greenland seal and the common or harbour seal. The former arrive in December or January, bring forth their young in February or March, and leave in August. The male is sometimes eight feet long, and may weigh 800 pounds. When on shore they live in families, each male attended by several females. They are sometimes hunted by residents, though this is not without danger. The common or harbour seal is a permanent dweller. In the waters around, particularly to the south, it is found in great numbers, but it delights to bask on the sands, or, when the sea has formed an opening into the lake, to play in its shallows. It sometimes reaches a length of six feet, though five is more common. It brings forth its young in May, which in about twenty days take to the water.¹

Of mollusca found on the island the following list was prepared by Mr. J. Willis in 1858 :

<i>Anomia ephippium.</i>	<i>Helix subglobosa.</i>
<i>squamula.</i>	<i>Mytilus borealis.</i>
<i>Astarte sulcata.</i>	<i>Modiola Americana.</i>
<i>castanea.</i>	<i>plicatula.</i>
<i>Anatina leana.</i>	<i>Mactra gigantea.</i>
<i>Buccinum undatum.</i>	<i>Mya arenaria.</i>
<i>trivittatum.</i>	<i>Natice clausa.</i>
<i>Crepidula convexa.</i>	<i>heros.</i>
<i>fornicata.</i>	<i>Phaeds dactylus.</i>
<i>Cardium edule.</i>	<i>Pecten Magellanicus.</i>
<i>Caronula balenaris.</i>	<i>islandicus.</i>
<i>diadema.</i>	<i>concentricus.</i>
<i>Cyprinus islandicus.</i>	<i>Rostellaria occidentalis.</i>
<i>Cytheria convexa.</i>	<i>Solen ensis.</i>
<i>Echinus granulatus.</i>	<i>Saxicava rugosa.</i>
<i>Echinarachnius pasina.</i>	<i>Spirula Peronii.</i>
<i>Fusus decemcostatus.</i>	<i>sperdum.</i>
<i>ventricosus.</i>	<i>Serpula ———.</i>
<i>Glycineris siliqua.</i>	<i>Venus mercenaria.</i>

DRIFT SHELLS.

<i>Ostrea borealis.</i>	<i>Columbella mercatoria, West Indies.</i>
<i>Cardium Virginiana, W. Indies, U. States.</i>	<i>Olivia porphyria, Panama.</i>
<i>Strumbus pugilis, West Indies.</i>	

Of crustacea there are three varieties of crabs and lobsters of immense size. There are also a number of shrimps, sandhoppers, etc.

II. EARLY NOTICES OF SABLE ISLAND, 1500-1600.

Who first of European voyagers sighted this island is unknown. Mr. S. D. McDonald supposes that it was to it that Cabot refers, when on his first voyage, starting to return

¹ See Dr. Gilpin on "Seals of Nova Scotia," 'Transactions of N. S. Institute of Science,' iii., 377; McDonald's "Notes on Sable Island," *ibid.*, vi., 22.

homeward, he passed two islands, which he might conclude the sand-hills to be. If this were correct, it would be the first recorded notice of this island being seen by mortal man. But this view is a mere conjecture, with scarcely anything to support it.

It is certain, however, that at the beginning of the sixteenth century the fishermen of western Europe were acquainted with it. This is shown by maps of the period. One preserved in the royal library at Munich, marked as made by Pedro Reinel, who is described by Herrera as "a Portuguese pilot of much fame," and supposed to be of about the year 1505, has it under the name of Santa Cruz.

On the 13th March, 1521, the king of Portugal granted to Joam Alvarez Fagundes a large territory embracing Nova Scotia and adjacencies, together with various islands lying off it, which he is said to have discovered on a previous voyage, and among them is Santa Cruz.

Under this name it also appears in the celebrated mappemonde dated 1544, attributed to Sebastian Cabot, and in a Portuguese map of Diego Homem it appears under the similar name of I. da Cruz.

Gastaldi, a distinguished Italian cartographer, in a map of 1548, represents it under the name Isolla del Arena, and he is followed by his countryman Zaltieri in 1566. But as early as 1546 Joannes Freire, a Portuguese mapmaker, calls it I. de Sable. A number of other maps of this century show an island unnamed in a position indicating that this was the one intended, and by the end of that period it seems to have been commonly known by that name.

It is therefore certain that at this early period the island was well known to the fishermen and traders who resorted to our coasts. In addition we find it occupied by Europeans, who, if they did not permanently reside upon it, placed upon it cattle, which bred and multiplied. Lescarbot, the historian of Port Royal, says that the Baron de Léry undertook to commence a colony in America, and with that object sailed from France in 1518 with a band of emigrants. But failing in his purpose, he returned home, leaving the cattle on this island. He writes about one hundred years after the event, and mentions it incidentally in referring to La Roche's emigrants in 1598; but as no notice of such an expedition appears in any record or in the works of any author during that interval, we cannot regard his authority as sufficient to establish the fact. Moreover, Charlevoix, who was diligent in collecting information regarding the early voyages to America, and who, in his "*Fastes Chronologiques*," has given a chronological table of them, knew nothing of de Léry's. Neither does Champlain, who was on the same expedition as Lescarbot to Port Royal, who had the same means of information, and is more reliable as a historian. He refers also to the fact of cattle being upon the island, but says they were left there about sixty years before he wrote, or about the year 1552, by the Portuguese. All the circumstances render the idea of such an expedition as Lescarbot ascribes to de Léry at that time utterly improbable. France was in such a condition that her rulers had not begun the work of western exploration. It was six years later that Verrazzano received his commission for that purpose, and exploration almost necessarily preceded colonization. Norman and Breton fishermen, it is true, were by that time visiting the banks and coasts of Newfoundland, and perhaps also Acadia and the St. Lawrence, but they did not favour colonization. Indeed, at that time the idea had not taken possession of the French people, nor had the king set up his claim to territorial authority in America.

Whether the French had placed cattle upon it so early as alleged, it is certain, however, that this was done a little later by the Portuguese. Not only does Champlain mention the fact, but we find the same asserted by the historian of Sir Humphrey Gilbert's expedition. That intrepid mariner sailed from Newfoundland in 1583 for the American coast, intending, after making Cape Breton, to go to Sable island, as the writer says, "upon intelligence we had of a Portugal who was himself present when the Portugals, above thirty years past," consequently before 1553, "did put into the same island neat and swine to breed, which were since exceedingly multiplied." Charlevoix, indeed, says that the cattle and sheep had escaped from some Spanish vessels which had sailed to settle Cape Breton, but which had been wrecked on the island. It seems evident that the good father was mistaken as to the nationality of these vessels. History gives us no record of the Spaniards attempting settlement so far north, but it is known that the Portuguese did attempt a settlement in Cape Breton as described. As the latter had for some time been subject to the former, he might easily have confounded the two.

The island and the cattle upon it next come into notice by the expedition of Troilus du Mesgouez, Marquis de la Roche. He was a Catholic nobleman of Brittany, who had from his youth been connected with the French court. He agreed with the king to found a colony in America, and for that purpose received from him a commission in which he was named lieutenant-general of Canada, Hochelaga, Newfoundland, Labrador, and the countries adjacent, with sovereign power over this vast domain. This commission was first issued in 1578, but not having been acted on, it was renewed in 1598.

In that year¹ he set out with one small vessel, under Chef d'hôtel, a distinguished Norman pilot, and having on board fifty or sixty convicts. He reached Sable island and landed them there. Leaving a small supply of provisions and goods, he sailed away to explore the neighbouring coast of Acadia, and to select a site for settlement to which he proposed afterward to remove them. On his return he was caught by a tempest, which drove him eastward. His frail bark was obliged to run before the storm, and at last he reached France, intending soon to return. But misfortune attended him. The Duc de Monceur is said to have cast him into prison. At all events five years elapsed before anything could be done for the relief of the unfortunate creatures he had left behind.

In the meantime they had formed a shelter for themselves from the timber of wrecks, had killed seals and the cattle which they found upon the island, using their skins for clothing and their flesh for food, modifying their animal diet with berries, which were abundant. Their miseries did not subdue their passions. Quarrels broke out among them, which led to fatal affrays.

At length, in 1603, Chef d'hôtel was despatched to bring them home. He arrived at the island on the 20th September, but found only eleven survivors. They were brought back to France, and were presented to the king, clothed from head to foot in shaggy skins, and their hair of prodigious length. They had accumulated a quantity of valuable furs, which, with a bounty from the king, enabled them to engage on their own account in Canadian trade.²

¹ Paul de Cazes (*Transactions of Royal Society of Canada*, vol. ii., and again vol. x., sec. i., p. 7) has endeavoured to place this expedition in 1588. His main reason for this is that Monceur, having made peace with the king in 1598, could not after that date have imprisoned La Roche. But the documents quoted by Parkman (*Pioneers*, page 234) seem to leave no doubt that it took place in that year.

² There were till recently, and probably are yet, grounds inclosed by an embankment of sods, known as the

At this early period we find no particular account of the island. The earliest we have found is by De Laet in his "Novus Orbis," published in 1633, which may be held as representing the reports received of it in the years previous. "Farthermore," he says, "the island of Sabla (so called by the French from its sands) is situated in 44 degrees north latitude, about thirty leagues from the island of the Bretons, or of St. Lawrence, toward the south. It is about fifteen leagues (over forty miles) in circuit, much longer than it is broad, the sea surrounding it being shallow and without harbours, and having a bad repute for shipwrecks." . . . "There is but one small pond, but no springs of water, in the island, many thickets of bushes, very few trees, the soil naked or but slightly covered with grass, and the landing is difficult."

The position here assigned to the island is pretty nearly correct, but the author must have been in error as to its dimensions. In describing it as having a circuit of a little over forty miles he represents it as scarcely as large then as it is at present. But, from the rapidity with which it is wasting away, it is evident that in those early times it must have been much larger. From actual measurements it is proved that since the end of the eighteenth century it has diminished from forty miles in length and two and a half in breadth, to twenty miles in length by one in breadth. It is also certain that the hills have diminished from two hundred feet to eighty in height. But as the wasting had been going on long previous to that date, it must in the early times have been much larger. Mr. S. D. McDonald, from the rate of disintegration going on in the observed period, calculates that three hundred years ago the island would have been two hundred miles long and the hills upon it eight hundred feet high.

His estimate may be too large, but there cannot be a doubt that in the sixteenth century it must have been much larger than it is at present. From its position, surrounded by water and on the edge of the gulf stream, its climate must have been milder and more equable than that of the mainland. Snow does not lie upon it and the frost is not severe. De Laet represents it as having thickets of bushes and a few trees. There is nothing of the kind now, and it would be interesting to know whether he was correctly informed on this point or not. The island being so much larger and the hills so much higher, it might have afforded a shelter under which bushes or trees might have grown. At all events the soil of peaty mould, which must have been then more extensive than, owing to the encroachment of the sand, it has since become, indicates that for a lengthened period it had been the site of a copious vegetation. Thus, to the first comers, the island presented advantages for grazing not afforded on the mainland, where much of the land was rocky and barren, and where what was fertile was covered with wood to the water's edge. These circumstances will account for the fact of parties placing their cattle upon it, if not with a view to permanent settlement, at least for temporary occupation.

Mr. McDonald also supposes that at that time it contained a convenient harbour. Our author affirms the contrary, and we believe him to be correct. At a later period the pond in the centre was open to small vessels, but it was in consequence of the sea cutting a passage to it through the ridge of sand which separates it from the ocean. But there is nothing at this early period to indicate anything of the kind.

De Laet tells us that even at this early period the island was in bad repute for ship-

French gardens, said to have been the work of La Roche's convicts. The work is older than the present establishment on the island, and the tradition may be well founded.

wrecks. In spring the fields of ice, which gathered on the southern shores of Cape Breton, then as now would require the navigator bound for the gulf of St. Lawrence, or the fisherman coming to ply his craft on the shores of Acadia, in approaching land, to run southward and then work up to the coast. They were thus necessarily brought into close proximity to the island, and amid the winds and currents, treacherous and uncertain then as now, must have often been driven upon it, to their utter destruction, sometimes striking on the bars and being engulfed in the pitiless sea, leaving no trace behind ; or at other times striking the island itself, the vessels scattered in fragments on its shore, their crews perhaps perishing in the catastrophe, or landing to linger out existence on the island, till either death came or possibly in some instances they might be rescued by some passing vessel.

One instance of this kind was brought to light some years ago. One of the men connected with the humane establishment on the island having his attention directed to a blackened line on the face of a sand-cliff, the sand was removed, when there was found the site of an old encampment. Scattered about were rusty guns and bayonets, knives made from iron hoops, broken glass, a tattered English ensign, human bones mingled with those of cattle and seals, and an English shilling of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, as sharp as when it came from the die. Nothing more could be learned as to who the party were who left these memorials than that they were Englishmen, but the coin and some of the other articles might indicate that they were some English sea-rovers of the days of Good Queen Bess. But if the weapons were really bayonets, the party must have belonged to a subsequent age. What their fate was cannot be known. The bones of cattle showed that from the stock of these left upon the island they had been able to prolong life, but the human bones seemed to show that at length they had succumbed to the hard circumstances of their lot and perished on the island. How many more met a similar fate can only be known when the sea gives up the dead which are in it.¹

III. FROM THE REMOVAL OF LA ROCHE'S COLONISTS TILL THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FIRST LIFE-SAVING STATION, 1601-1801.

From the time of the removal of La Roche's colonists, for a period of two hundred years, there is little recorded of this island. We know little more of it than that it was the same scene of wreck and destruction as before, only more extensive as commerce with America had increased.

There are several notices of it in Winthrop's "Journal," from which it appears that in the early part of the seventeenth century it was resorted to both by English and French fishermen, especially for the capture of the walrus and the seal. The former were then abundant, and were eagerly sought, their carcasses affording a large quantity of oil, their skins forming the toughest leather, and their tusks being of the best ivory and worth from three to four dollars a pair.

From the same source we learn that in the year 1633 John Rose of Boston, in his ship, the "Mary and Jane," was wrecked on the island. He was three months upon it, during which he constructed a yawl out of the remains of his vessel, in which he was able to reach the mainland. He reported that he had seen upon it "more than eight hundred head of

¹ Some writers have supposed that it was here that Sir Humphrey Gilbert's principal ship was wrecked. But a closer observation of Hayes's narrative shows that, while he sailed from Newfoundland intending to reach Sable island, he first directed his course to Cape Breton, where he lost his leading vessel.

wild cattle, and a great many foxes, many of which were black." The number of cattle is perhaps exaggerated; and we are tempted to ask what the foxes found to live on? At all events his reports so interested the Acadians that seventeen of them started in a vessel for the island, Rose acting as pilot. He afterward returned to Boston, and, from the information received from him, a company was formed to hunt on the island. On their arrival they found that the Acadians had built houses and fortified themselves, and made such a slaughter among the cattle that only about one hundred and fifty remained.¹ What became ultimately of these cattle we are not informed. Probably they were killed off by the fishermen. At all events we hear no more of them. Only at a much later period do we hear of cattle upon the island, and then it is of tame ones introduced for the use of residents.

For about a century we hear nothing more of this island. But at the end of that period we find an interesting attempt made to form an establishment on it. This was by the Rev. Andrew Le Mercier. He was a graduate of Geneva, but of old Huguenot stock, and in 1719 became pastor of the French Protestant church of Boston. On the arrival of Governor Phillips in Nova Scotia, in 1729, he made proposals to him to plant a colony of French Protestants in Nova Scotia. The governor recommended a grant of 5,000 acres, but nothing came of the project.

Le Mercier's attention, however, had been directed toward Sable island, and on the 6th March, 1738, he wrote to Governor Armstrong, inclosing a petition for a grant of it, on behalf of himself and his associates. His design was stated as being to stock it with such domestic animals as might be useful in preserving the lives of mariners who might escape from shipwrecks; though, from the suitableness of much of the soil for grazing and the opportunities afforded for seal hunting, they no doubt hoped to combine profit with benevolence. The petition was approved, but the grant does not seem to have actually passed. He was unwilling to pay the penny an acre quit rent demanded by the instructions of his majesty's government. The lieutenant-governor and council referred the matter to the board of trade, to whom he wrote on the 10th April of that year. But what answer he received, or whether any, does not appear. But in the meantime Mr. M. sent a stock of cattle to the island, preparatory to removing his family thither.

In 1740 he again applies for a grant of the island, but represents that as the land is "low, boggy and sandy soil, with large ponds or settlements of water occasioned by the overflowing of the tides, he thinks the penny an acre too much for what cannot be improved." On the 16th August Governor Mascarene writes to the board of trade that it would be to the advantage of the public to encourage the settlement, by affording relief to the shipwrecked, and profitable to the proprietors by grazing, fishing, and killing seals for their oil and skins. Le Mercier does not even then seem to have received his grant, but he continued to have cattle upon the island for some years, and also some settlers, and through his efforts many lives were saved. But he complains that evil-disposed fishermen stole his cattle and goods, and in 1744 we find him advertising in Boston papers a reward of £40 for the discovery of the depredators.

For the next fifty years we have only occasional notices of this ill-fated isle. In the year 1746 the Duc d'Anville, in his celebrated expedition against the British colonies, was overtaken with a severe storm near this island, and lost a transport and a fire-ship. In the year 1761 a vessel with part of the 43rd regiment, returning from the capture of Quebec, was wrecked on the island.² This was curiously brought to light long after. In the year

¹ See Appendix, p. 45.

² Murdoch's "Nova Scotia," ii, 403.

1842, during a severe gale, an old landmark in the form of a pyramid, said to be one hundred feet high, was completely blown away, exposing some small huts built of the timbers and planks of a vessel. On examination they were found to contain quite a number of articles of furniture, stores put in boxes, bales of blankets, a quantity of military shoes, and, among other articles, a dog-collar of brass, on which was engraved the name of Major Elliott, 43rd regiment. On referring to the records of the regiment, however, it was found that the party had been taken off the island. The site of the encampment is now under at least five fathoms of water.

In the year 1774 mention is made of permission granted by Governor Legge, and approved by the king, to Michael Flannigan and his associates to reside on the island.¹ But we know nothing of the purpose for which they went there or how long they remained.

But we find that the island continued to be occupied. In the year 1788 mention is made of one Jesse Lawrence as residing there to receive wrecked people and to carry on the seal fishery. Some people from Massachusetts landing there wantonly pillaged and destroyed his house and effects, and compelled him to leave the island. He received some compensation from Governor Hancock and the council of Massachusetts, but not equal to his losses.

Probably not a year elapsed without one or more vessels being wrecked and a number of lives lost. But some disasters of this kind that occurred at the close of the century directed the attention of the authorities to the subject. On the 9th November, 1797, the brig "Princess Amelia," Capt. Wyatt, from London, was wrecked on the south side of the island. Provisions and passengers' baggage were saved, and a hut found on the island, by which those saved were enabled to live. On the 4th December the schooner "Hero," Thomas Cunningham, master, being in the neighbourhood, he saw over thirty men on the island, making signals. But the tempestuous weather drove him off. He arrived at Cole Harbour about the new year, in great destitution and distress. There he and his crew were received by a Mr. Mundy, an aged man inhabiting a cottage there, who gave them all the provisions he had laid up for his family for the winter, after which Cunningham put to sea again, leaving a written memorandum respecting the wrecked people he had found on Sable island. The governor on receiving the information, by advice of his council, hired a schooner belonging to Liverpool, the "Black Snake," Capt. Thomas Parker, and sent her to the island with provisions, blankets and clothing, which the inhabitants of Halifax contributed for the benefit of the wrecked men. Meanwhile Capt. Wyatt, with the Hon. Lieut. Cochrane² and four of the crew, left the island in the long boat, which they had decked with canvas, and made one of our eastern harbours. The "Black Snake" left Halifax on the 12th January, 1798, and returned with the rest of the crew and passengers on the 28th, leaving some men on the island during the winter to save property and assist vessels.³

In the year 1799, the "Francis," bringing the equipage of his royal highness the Duke of Kent, valued at £11,000, was lost here, and every soul on board perished. She had been detained in England owing to an embargo imposed on shipping on account of the Helder expedition, so that she was late in the season in leaving, and reached the coast toward the close of autumn, when, among the storms of that season, she met this untimely fate. The

¹ Murdoch: "Nova Scotia," ii., 526.

² It is said of the 7th regiment, but I think it probable that it was Lieut. Cochrane of the navy, afterward the Earl of Dundonald, who at that time was serving on the North American station with that rank.

³ The above is from Murdoch's "History of Nova Scotia." He gives the details so fully that it is plain he had before him some contemporary narrative, and there is every reason to regard it as correct.

outfit of the duke was very valuable, including furniture, plate, a select library, and a collection of maps, collected on the continent, of much value. Among those lost were the surgeon of the prince's regiment, who was in charge of the property, his wife and children, his Royal Highness's coachman and gardener, several officers, and a crew of nineteen men.¹

About this time reports were current of the island being the resort of wreckers and pirates of the worst description, but these became more prevalent in connection with this event. Jewels and rare articles were seen in the cabins of fishermen on the shores of Nova Scotia, and reported as coming from Sable island, some of them such as excited suspicion on their belonging to his royal highness's outfit. Stories were circulated even of murder, and it was believed that some belonging to this vessel had reached the shore in safety but were afterward murdered for the sake of their property. The attention of the authorities of Nova Scotia was roused. Accordingly, in response to a message from the governor, Sir John Wentworth, the legislature at its session in 1801 passed an act for the protection of shipwrecked property. Several clauses applied to the province in general, but some refer specially to Sable island. By these the governor was authorized to appoint a person from time to time to inspect the island, who should have power to remove from it any person who may have gone there voluntarily, without a license under the hand and seal of the governor, lieutenant-governor or commander-in-chief, together with all goods found in his possession. Justices were empowered to order such to be imprisoned for a period of not less than six months, the goods found in their possession to be sold, and the surplus, if any, paid over to the rightful owner if known, or, if not, into the treasury to be held for his benefit.

A proclamation was issued to this effect, and it having been reported that a man and woman of bad character had taken up their abode on the island for evil purposes, Mr. Seth Colman was sent there with power to remove them, which we understand was done.

In connection with this affair there hangs a tale of the marvellous, which, as it has gained a place in literature, must be referred to. It is thus given by Haliburton in his "Wise Saws and Modern Instances," omitting his Yankee dialect and pruning his verbiage:

"In the year 1802 the 'Princess Amelia' was wrecked here, having the furniture of the queen's father, Prince Edward, on board, and a number of recruits, officers and their wives and women servants. There were two hundred souls of them altogether, and they all perished. About that time piratical vagabonds used to frequent there, for there was no regular establishment kept upon the island then; and it is generally supposed some of the poor people of that unfortunate ship reached the shore in safety, and were murdered by the wreckers for their property. The prince sent down Capt. Torrens of the 29th regiment to inquire after the missing ship.² But he was wrecked, and nearly lost his life in endeavouring to save others. There were few that could be rescued before the vessel went to pieces. He stationed the survivors at one end of the island, and went to the other to extend his lookout for aid as far as he could; but first they had to bury the dead that floated from the troopship, and gather up such parts of the prince's effects as came ashore and were worth saving. It was an awful task, and took a long time, for the grave was almost as large as a cellar. Having done this, and finding firearms in the government shelter-hut, he started off alone to the other end of the island. One day, having made the circuit of the lower half (we presume the western), he returned about dusk to where there was a hut that had

¹ Neale's "Life of the Duke of Kent."

² In the brig "Harlot" of Newcastle, not the gunbrig "Harriet," as sometimes asserted.

fireworks in it, and some food and chairs and tables that had been saved from wrecks, which were placed there for distressed people, and there were printed instructions telling them what to do to keep themselves alive till they could be taken off. He made a fire, drew some hay out of the loft, made up a bed in one corner, and went out to take a walk along the side of the lake before turning in. As he returned he was surprised to see his dog at the door, seemingly thoroughly scared and barking furiously. The first thing he saw inside was a lady sitting on one side of the fire, with long, dripping hair hanging over her shoulders, her face pale as death, and having no clothes on but a loose, soiled white dress, wet as if it had come out of the sea and with sand sticking to it. 'Good heavens, madam,' he exclaimed, 'who are you, and where did you come from?'

"She did not speak to him, but only held up her hand before her, when he saw that one of the fingers was cut off and was still bleeding. He turned round and opened a case that he had picked up in the morning from the drift ship, in which were materials for bandaging the wound, and was about offering her assistance, when she suddenly slipped by him and passed out of the door. He followed her, calling her and begging her to stop, but on she went, and thinking that she was out of her mind, he ran after her, and the faster he went the swifter she went till she reached the lake, when she plunged in head foremost.

"He puzzled himself over the affair, and concluded that it was neither a ghost nor a demented person, but a murdered woman, and he vowed vengeance on the piratical villain who had done the deed, if he should find him. Returning to the hut, he found her in the same place. She held up the mutilated hand again. He paused before speaking, and looked intently upon her, when he recognized her as the wife of Dr. Copeland, the surgeon of the 7th, the prince's own regiment, a lady well known to him and well known and beloved in Halifax. 'Why, Mrs. Copeland, is that you!' he exclaimed. She bowed her head, and then held up her hand, showing the bloody stump of a finger. 'I have it,' said he; 'murdered for the sake of your ring.' She bowed her head. 'Well, I'll track the villain out, till he is shot or hanged.' She looked sad and made no sign. 'Well,' said he, 'I'll leave no stone unturned to recover that ring and restore it to your family.' She smiled, bowed her head, and waving her hand for him to keep out of the way, as he did she slipped past him. She then turned and held up both hands as pushing some one back. She retreated in this manner, and he did not attempt to follow her.

"'Now that story is a positive fact,' said the superintendent. 'Them is the real names. My father heard Torrens tell it word for word, and there is people now living to Halifax who knew him well, for he was a great favourite with everybody. Just after that there was an awful storm, and another wreck, and he was mainly the means of saving the people, at the risk of his own life. His name is on the chart as the 'brave Captain Torrens.' The House of Assembly voted him a large sum of money, and the prince thought everything of him.'

"Captain Torrens got hold of the names of three of the most noted wreckers, and on his return to Nova Scotia set to work to trace them out. One of them lived at Salmon river, whither the captain went. He found him away at the Labrador, but he became intimate with the family by staying with them while fishing and hunting in the neighbourhood. One evening he put on a splendid ring which he had brought down for the purpose of directing conversation to the subject in which he was interested. The eldest girl admired it greatly, and he took it off and it was handed round, when one of the daughters said that she did not

think it half as pretty as the one her father had taken off the lady's hand at Sable island. 'No, my dear,' said the mother, who came behind his chair to telegraph, 'he got it from a Frenchman, who picked it up on the sand there.' 'Oh, I believe it was,' said the girl, colouring up and looking confused. The ring was handed back, and he asked for a sight of theirs, offering to purchase it if it was as handsome. He was told that it was in the hands of a watchmaker in Halifax, with whom it was left to sell, and who had advanced twenty shillings upon it. The next morning he started on his return to Halifax. There were then only two watchmakers in town, and in the shop of the first he visited he found the ring, and on inquiring its history received the same account as he had heard. He immediately said: 'Give it to me; here are the twenty shillings advanced; and if the owner wants more, tell him to bring the finger that was cut off to get at it, and then come to me.'

"The ring was identified at once by the ladies of the regiment and some of the doctor's brother officers. And the moment the prince saw it he knew it, for it was a curious old family ring, and the captain sent it to England to Mrs. Copeland's friends. Capt. Torrens was ordered home soon after that, and there the matter dropped.

"Well," says Eldad, 'that story is as true as gospel, for I've heard it from Mr. Collingwood's father, who was with the prince at the time, and saw the ring; and, more than that, I can tell you the name of the wrecker, but I won't, for some of his descendants are still living and are decent people. I have seen the old coon several times, and nothing could coax him out of the house after dark.'

The author evidently meant to represent the statements of this story as real facts, for he says in a note that "it is given with the real names, and was well known to an officer of the 7th, still living, who was intimately acquainted with the parties." This can be no other than the late chief justice Haliburton, who was an officer of the 7th while the prince was in Halifax. No better authority could be given. None would doubt his truthfulness. As little would any who knew him question the soundness of his judgment. Accustomed to weigh evidence and to form conclusions from facts, he was little likely to be led astray by idle tales. In addition, being in a position to know the whole circumstances of the case, one could not doubt the story if really told by him. At all events it has long been firmly believed in a circle in Halifax and on the southern shore of Nova Scotia. Curiously enough, Haliburton gives to one of the speakers in whose mouth he puts the story, the name of a man who was generally regarded in his neighbourhood, as having shared in the plunder which had been brought from the island. We may add further, that the site of the hut in which the lady appeared has been till recently, and perhaps is yet, pointed out, being known as "smoky hut," and a tribe of horses which fed in its neighbourhood being known as the "smoky hut gang."

And yet his statement is so full of errors, so mixed up, and even contradictory, as to throw discredit upon the whole narrative. In the first place, he represents the vessel which was bringing the furniture of Prince Edward from England as wrecked on the island in 1802. Passing the error of calling her the "Princess Amelia," which was wrecked in 1797, five years previous, it is to be noted that the prince had finally left Halifax in 1800, two years previous. He received his appointment as commander-in-chief in 1799, and arrived in Halifax in September. His equipage followed and was lost, the same season. Besides, while he states that there was then no regular establishment on the island, there has been such an institution since 1801, and the superintendent reported all wrecks from that date,

and there was among them no "Princess Amelia," no transport, and no vessel carrying the goods of Prince Edward. In 1802, too, he was in command at Gibraltar, and could not have despatched Capt. Torrens from Halifax to look after his missing ship.

It might be said that this is only an error in date. But this still leaves the story in confusion. The author represents Capt. Torrens as having occupied the government shelter-house, but this was only erected after the foundation of the relief establishment in 1801, so that his visit must have been after that date. But, in fact, we know from the records that his visit was in 1803, and that the vessel in which he went, the "Harrow" of Newcastle, was wrecked in that year. Then his story of burying the dead floating from the transport, so many that the grave was as large as a cellar, is simply absurd. It is rarely that the sea casts upon the island bodies once in its embrace, but if there was any such transport wrecked it must have been three years before, and that such a number were coming ashore so long after is incredible. And what had the men of the government establishment been doing in the meantime?

While the story in its details is so inaccurate, there remain the three facts, that the vessel containing the prince's equipage was lost on the island in 1799 and all on board perished; that rumours of piracy on the island followed, which led to the action of the government of Nova Scotia; and that in 1803 it sent down Capt. Torrens, on the application of the superintendent, for the removal of a family of bad reputation that he had found on the island. As to the appearance of the woman we must leave the question to the society for psychical research.¹

IV. FIRST RELIEF ESTABLISHMENT ON THE ISLAND, 1801-1809.

The same year that the legislature adopted measures for the removal of wreckers from the island, they projected an establishment for the saving of life and property. On the 25th June, 1801, the House of Assembly addressed the governor recommending the settlement of three families of good character upon it, under the immediate authority and direction of the government—also that persons for the situation be advertised for, with the expectation that by securing to them a term of possession and exclusive right to certain advantages, suitable persons might be obtained at little expense, and that H. M. council draw up proper regulations for their government. To meet the expense they granted a vote of £600 (\$2,400).

On the 27th the governor replies that he will have great satisfaction in carrying their proposal into effect. Measures were immediately adopted for the purpose. Commissioners were appointed to have charge of the business, of whom the treasurer, Hon. Michael Wallace, was the most important. James Morris was appointed superintendent at an annual salary of £60 (\$240) per annum, afterwards increased to £100 (\$400), with board for himself and wife. Four men were engaged at the rate of £2 (afterwards raised to £3) per month, to serve under him, who bound themselves to use their utmost endeavours to protect life and property. A little later we find Edward Hodgson with his family on the island, acting as assistant to the superintendent, and second in command.

¹ It should be noted that there are several other ghost stories connected with the island. One is of a Paris gentleman that always appears to wrecked Frenchmen, and complains of Henry IV. for banishing his wife with the convicts of 1598. Another is of one of the regicides of Charles I., who made this island a hiding place, and lived and died here, who on the 29th of May marches round with broad-brimmed hat on, and singing psalms through his nose so loudly as to be heard above the storm.

On the 6th October, the party sailed from Halifax in two vessels, carrying all the supplies and material deemed necessary for such an establishment. Among these were the frame of a house 28 x 18 feet, one for a storehouse 16 x 12, with lumber, nails, etc., for its completion, a set of carpenters' tools, a medicine chest, a whale boat with oars, provisions, etc. They also carried the following live stock: 1 3-year-old bull, 2 young cows in calf, 2 young sows, 1 young boar, 1 male and 1 female goat, 2 rams, 8 ewes and 1 horse. They also took a supply of grass and garden seeds. The outfit was complete, costing over two thousand dollars and consuming the greater part of the assembly's grant.

The party landed on the 13th and the vessels returned to Halifax, leaving them to their own exertions. Their first care was the erection of the houses. Before they could get this accomplished their provisions were damaged by the wet, so that if they had not found bread on the island from some of the wrecks, they must have suffered. "This," says Mr. Morris in his report, "gave us many hard struggles ere the buildings were in order, and having no bills of the scantling, and several pieces lost, occasioned another difficulty. But by making substitutes and by prayer and perseverance, the store and house were put in good order by the 6th November. But surely the carpenter that framed the house was either in love or stupid, as many pieces were wrong numbered, and no braces of any consequence to the building, which gave me a great deal of trouble to affix the frame, as a building on this island should be exceedingly well braced on all angles."

The site of these buildings was on the north side about five miles from where the west end of the island then was, but now some miles at sea. Here was erected a flagstaff, and within the following year were added at this point a stable, a forge and a fowl house. About the centre of the island was an old house 20 x 14 feet, but toward the east end of the island they erected a new one 18 x 14 feet, which was afterwards occupied by Hodgson and his family. Here also was erected a flagstaff. At a later period we find Mr. M. recommending the erection of three more buildings, one on the north side at the east end of the lake, another nearly opposite on the south, and a third about five miles further east than Hodgson's station, but these do not seem to have been built in his time.

Two vessels had been wrecked that season, the ship "Packet" of Boston, and the schooner "Industry" of Liverpool, N. S., and it was not long till their services were in requisition for others, and the benefits of the institution were to be proved. On the 16th December, the "Hannah and Eliza," a fine new ship belonging to Boston, on her passage from Rotterdam to that port, laden with salt, was stranded on the south side of the island, but the crew numbering thirteen were all saved.

On the 19th of March, 1802, Mr. Morris writes to the commissioners: "All the people that were landed on the 13th October last, are at present in good health. All the stock of cattle that were landed are in excellent order. The sheep have wintered independent of us, generally keeping a distance from us toward the northwest bar in the valley. I often brought them to the stack of hay, which was very good, but they seldom ate any. They have lost three lambs, and there are four living. The goat has lost her kids. The bull we yoke and he draws well. The horse has been of infinite service to us. The hogs have no hair from the gristle of the nose to their eyes from rooting in the sand. I expect they will be a damage in the end." He also mentions that from the 20th October they had had a succession of gales, so that he was confident there had not been five days of calm weather in four months. In consequence he had not been able to take soundings round the island. In consequence of the scarcity of provisions he had in the month of February despatched a boat

which he had newly built, in the hope of her reaching the mainland or being picked up by some vessel, but after cruising thirteen days with various winds she returned to the island. Wild fowl had been scarce. He proposes as soon as possible making a trial for fish, but if unsuccessful he will try one of the horses, which he thinks will make good venison.

These horses were the only animals found on the island, if we except the rats and mice, which at one time became very troublesome. When they were placed there is uncertain. Dr. Gilpin supposes that they are the progeny of animals placed upon the island by the Rev. Mr. Le Mercier, and that they are of the ordinary New England stock. Writing about 1864, he estimates them at 400 in number. When Haliburton wrote about 1828, they were reckoned at 300, and in recent times they have been variously estimated at from 150 to 250. Indeed, from different causes, sandstorms destroying pasturage, severe winters, and destruction and capture by residents, their number has been reduced at various times. As the doctor has given a full description of them we shall give the substance of what he has written.

He describes them as from twelve to fourteen hands high, seldom reaching the last figure, head large and ill set on, with usually the round Roman nose and thick jaw; the ear small, short and square at the top, crest very thick and heavy in the male, neck cock thrapped or swelling out in front, withers very low, quarters short and sloping, legs very strong and robust, with thick upright pasterns, the eye not large or bright, the mouth very short, the forelock and mane abundant, reaching nearly to the ground and covering the nostrils. The weight of the mane often pulls the crest over so that especially in the mares, the neck becomes cave necked, the foretoe usually turned outward or paddle footed, and the withers seemingly lower than the rump or quarters, although they are exceedingly short and sloping. The coat is during winter long and shaggy, especially under the chin and on the legs.

In colour the bays are the most numerous, including the brown with them, next are the chestnuts. The blacks are few and there are no grays, but a number of a bluish mouse colour. Altogether in appearance and habits they resemble the wild horses of Tartary.

They were divided into about six herds or gangs, each gang headed by an old male, who was conspicuous by his masses of mane and tail. Each herd had its separate feeding-ground, to which the individuals belonging to the gang seemed equally attached as to their leader. On driving over the island and mixing them promiscuously, by the next morning they had returned to their separate feeding-grounds, some of them travelling ten or twelve miles during the night for the purpose. On approaching them, the leader would leave his family, and, advancing toward the intruder, assume a defiant attitude, as if prepared to fight if any interference with those under his charge should be attempted. On being further pressed, however, he might be seen to drive outlying parties of mares and young horses into the main herd, who would begin a general retreat at a slow trot, he keeping in the rear. If pressed still farther by persons on horseback, he would join the herd, now in a gallop, but still always keeping in the rear, the idea of leadership being thus unmistakable.

"The gang," says the doctor, "consists of mares, colts and young horses. When the latter attain their full growth, the leader generally turns them out. These then wander about the island, until they manage to steal a few mares away from some of the others and form new gangs for themselves. On these occasions severe fighting ensues between the leader and the intruder, the conflict not infrequently lasting for hours, each biting and tearing the other till one is overpowered. If the intruder beats the leader of the gang, he takes his place and appropriates to himself the mares or as many as he wants. It sometimes hap-

pens, when a young stud horse wants to form a gang, he proceeds surreptitiously at night and inveigles away a mare to some other part of the island. When her master finds her missing, he searches for her, and if he finds her a furious fight with her captor ensues. If victorious, he marches her off with him back to the gang. If defeated, the conqueror will in all probability despoil him of other females, and thus break up the gang. The mares accept the situation when the fighting is over, give in their allegiance to the conqueror, and live peaceably with him till some new domestic trouble arises."

They are extremely hardy, enduring the most inclement weather with only the shelter of some sand-hillocks. Dr. Gilpin saw none lying down to rest. They refuse the shelter of a stable, and shun the society of man. When caught and confined, they will, in the roughest weather, escape from the stable, and put a mile or two between it and them before stopping to graze. In this they differ remarkably from the cattle, which, when left out, besiege the barn-door with their lowing through the winter.¹ In severe weather they gather together in the gulches or hollows between the sand-hills. Here they are said to arrange themselves in regular order, the colts in the centre, the older outside of them, and the master horse in the most exposed situation of all. Each spring, however, some of the old and infirm are found to have perished through the severity of the weather.

In the letter of Mr. Morris, which we have quoted, he proposes killing some of the horses for food. This was done to a considerable extent both by himself and his successors. In the year 1805, some wrecked men being upon the island and the supply of provisions becoming deficient, Mr. Morris was under the necessity of killing some of the horned cattle or wild horses, and offered them the first on allowance or the latter in moderate quantities. They say, "We all chose the horse venison, which was equal and some superior to any common beef on the continent."

In subsequent years they were used as occasion required in the same way. In the journal of one of the superintendents we find such entries as the following; "Decr. 10, 1842. We got another Fatt horse for to eat." The young males were usually selected for slaughter, being distinguished from the old horses by their superior condition, and by the latter having a long mane. They were usually shot, but they were so wild that it was not easy to approach within gunshot of them. As it was desirable that they should not be unnecessarily maimed, great care was taken by the marksman to secrete himself in a suitable place until an animal approached sufficiently near to render his aim certain, so as to kill him by a single shot. The flesh was said to be tender, and those who used it professed to relish it. As late as 1850 we find the superintendent shooting crippled or disabled animals for food for the hogs.

Very soon after the founding of the establishment it was proposed to render them serviceable. On the 20th April, 1803, an order came from the commissioners to the superintendent, if he could get hold of any of the horses, to send them to Halifax by the vessel visiting the island, and in June Mr. Wallace, the chief commissioner, mentions four having been received, one for the governor, one for General Bowyer, one for himself, and one for his son. In subsequent years the catching and exporting of these animals has formed an important part of the business of the men employed at the station, and their sale affords a contribution to the expenses of it.

¹ See paper in 'Proceedings of N. S. Institute of Science,' i., 60; also pamphlet published in 1858 by Dr. E. Gilpin.

At first tame horses were imported for the work of the station, but for some time the native horses have been used both for draught and riding round the island. To improve the breed, imported stallions have been let loose among them, the master horse of a herd, when possible, having been first secured and removed.

Of the animals introduced, the sheep were found not to thrive. Writing a few years later, Mr. Moffat reports that "the sheep are all dead, except the two pet lambs that were brought up in the house." Several attempts were afterward made to maintain them on the island, but though made with care they all failed. The animals seemed to thrive, but one after another would be found dead, though quite fat. The officers in charge of the admiralty survey of the island reported that they had found a plant which was fatal to sheep.

The hogs generally stood the climate well. There was a difficulty in maintaining them in a domestic state owing to the island not producing grain. Being allowed to run at large, they soon became wild, and at length became quite fierce. They still, however, yielded a supply of pork, which formed an important addition to the supply of provisions at the establishment. But the climate, and perhaps scarcity of food, restricted their increase, and at length, in an unusually severe winter, they all perished. For some years after it was not considered advisable to renew the stock, as from their feeding among objects coming ashore from wrecks they excited feelings of disgust. But they have been again introduced, and are kept round the establishment, where they are fed, the large quantities of damaged meal and other provisions from wrecks helping largely for that end, so that the pork thus supplied forms an item of some importance for the support of the residents. But owing to the island not producing grain, it has again been proposed to discontinue the raising of them.

The horned cattle were found to thrive, but a few years after they became afflicted with the horn distemper. That, however, has long since passed away, and now they do well, growing large and keeping in good condition. A number of cows are kept, supplying milk and butter to the inhabitants, and oxen for beef, though some additional has to be imported. The coarse grass of the island, with the wild pease mixed with it, forms a rich pasturage. It is also cut and dried for winter use, but as hay it is inferior. For this English grasses are cultivated.

English rabbits were introduced and multiplied, and formed an agreeable change in the food of the employees. But the rats landing from wrecked vessels multiplied to such an extent as to become a plague, consuming the stores, so as to threaten famine, and then by killing the young rabbits nearly annihilated the stock altogether. Then the government sent cats, who first killed the rats and then finished the rabbits. Next the cats became so numerous and wild as to become a trouble, when dogs were imported, and by means of them and shotguns the cats were exterminated. The island was then stocked with rabbits, which multiplied freely, when a snowy owl having visited the island, seemed delighted with the prospects. But without staying to regale himself on the abundance before him, started off seemingly to invite old friends to the feast. At all events a number of them immediately joined him in an expedition to the island, where they extinguished the rabbits, so that only a few tame ones are now to be seen. The rats still remain, and burrow as the rabbits. Poultry of all kinds have been introduced and thrive well.

During the next two or three years, Mr. Morris vigorously attempted the cultivation of the soil, but not very successfully. All the bushes of every kind that he brought died, as have all that have been introduced since. Trees have been planted, and grew for a year or

two but then died. He thus describes the result of his efforts with other plants: "I have been much deceived in the nature of the soil in this island. I supposed that almost all kinds of grain and garden vegetables would grow spontaneously with a little manure, but without abundance of that its fertility fails within two years. Not only so, but the south and south-east winds are poison to all that I have tried, such as oats, wheat, barley, Indian corn, English and Dutch grass, clover, potatoes, beans, cucumbers, onions, except when sheltered by hills or barricaded by art. But cabbages, turnips, beets, carrots, salad and radishes stand the blasts well and would thrive if the little fly would let them grow." Again he says, "I have not found any method in a variety of experiments to enlarge the growth of potatoes on the island. They are generally not larger than walnuts, but very good eating."

Since his time all attempts to raise grain, with the exception of oats, have been abandoned. And that is only sown for the straw as fodder, so that oats for the use of the horses and for seed has to be imported. English grasses are cultivated and hay is made from them for the wintering of the stock. Mr. Morris probably had not made a proper selection of soil for his experiments, for new potatoes grown on the island are not only of good quality, but are of fair size and yield good quantities. All the other vegetables mentioned by him are raised and some of them thrive well.

For the special work of the establishment, he was imperfectly provided. Though he had only four men with him, yet we find the commissioners ordering him to discharge two of them. He asks, in remonstrance, "Which shall it be, as they are all inclined to stay, are quiet, and always readily obey, and so must I?" But he delays till the return of the vessel. We need not say how crippled he would have been in carrying on even the ordinary work of the establishment, but especially in saving lives and property in the case of a wreck, if he had only two men with him and Hodgson at the other end of the island. But the commissioners do not seem to have insisted upon it.

But he seems to have done his work as efficiently as could be expected in his circumstances. In the year 1803 Governor Wentworth sent down Lieut. Torrens of the 29th regiment, in the brig "Hariott," to inquire into the state of matters. Morris, too, had requested the removal of a family of bad reputation. The vessel was unfortunately lost, and the lieutenant was obliged to stay that winter on the island. He took a deep interest in the men and their work, and did what was in his power to encourage and assist them. On the 9th July, 1804, a committee of the House of Assembly reported that the number of persons saved from shipwreck since the establishment was made on the island was as follows:

From the ship "Hannah and Eliza" of Boston.....	13 persons.
" " "Union"	11 "
" " "Stark Odder" of Copenhagen.....	5 "
" schooner ——— of Lunenburg	4 "
" brig "Hariott" of Newcastle.....	8 "
Total.....	41 "

That it appeared from the commissioners' account that property had been saved from the wrecks to the value as under:

From the ship "Hannah and Eliza"	£ 207 4 10
" " "Union"	158 8 4

From the ship "Stark Odder"	£	65	19	6
" brig "Hariott"		1,458	12	4
And from a schooner from Miramichi about 340 barrels pickled salmon, not yet brought from the island, supposed worth...		410	0	0
		£2,300 5 0		

We should mention that the same system in regard to the disposal of wrecks was adopted at the beginning that has continued to the present time. The wreck was taken charge of in the name of the commissioners. The men of the establishment were employed as long as the wreck held together and the weather was fit, in saving anything of her equipments or her cargo of value. After that they might also be employed in saving copper or old iron from her remains. The property saved was drawn to the central station, stored there, and afterward shipped to Halifax, where with the wreck it was sold for the benefit of all concerned. A portion of the proceeds, the amount being determined by Halifax merchants, was retained as salvage, from which an allowance was made to the men connected with the establishment.

At first the arrangements for visiting the island seem to have been imperfect, as might have been expected in a first attempt at the establishment of such an institution. As we have seen, the first winter there was a scarcity of provisions. Two winters after, the number to be fed being increased owing to a wrecked crew being on the island, Mr. Morris says that no provisions being saved from the wreck, all the cabbages, potatoes, turnips and small stores were equally divided, and that he had been under the necessity of killing some of the horned cattle or the wild horses. The government from time to time hired a vessel to visit them, carrying supplies and bringing back wrecked goods. But these visits were irregular and far between, so that they were sometimes put to inconvenience for want of necessaries. On November 3, 1808, Mr. Morris complains that he had sent for articles for his family as well as for his men, but that none, not even blankets ordered, had been sent, that he feared the winter for his children, and that it was with difficulty he could persuade the men to remain till spring. He mentions at the same time another trouble: "We have lately been alarmed in a surprising manner by rats and mice in incredible numbers, but with our dogs and a new-invented trap I hope soon to exterminate them. The traps take from fifteen to twenty a night." At this time there were sixteen souls on the island, more than half of them women and children.

For fuel they were dependent upon drift timber which came in considerable quantities to the south side of the island, or the remains of wrecks or their cargoes. But, probably from want of means of hauling it or opportunity of laying it up to dry, he complains sometimes of the difficulty of obtaining firewood for his family. We may mention that ever since this has been the main, and for the most of the time the only, source of fuel. A timber-laden vessel will supply wood for all purposes for years. The shipping of goods from the island is in any case a work of such difficulty and even danger, that it does not pay to ship the timber, and it is therefore purchased for the uses of the establishment. We may add that the timber thus cast upon the island is sometimes manufactured into shingles or sawn into lumber, and thus proves quite a gain.

The legislature, for the circumstances of the province at the time, showed a commendable liberality in the support of this establishment. In 1802 they voted £500 (\$2,000),

which, with £165 additional, was all expended by June, 1803. In the latter year they voted £600 (\$2,400). From the year 1804 they made an annual grant of £400 (\$1,600). In the year 1825 the case was represented by Sir James Kempt to the British government, which from that time gave an annual grant of £400 sterling, which has been continued to the present time. This seemed liberal, but a number of years after it was discovered, that they had been all the time paying the amount, not out of the Imperial treasury, but out of the casual and territorial revenue of Nova Scotia, which, though then controlled by the Home Government, really belonged to the people of that province. The Nova Scotia government continued its grant of £400 currency yearly till confederation, when the establishment passed under the control of the Dominion government. It may be mentioned here that the American government during the last war issued orders to the public and private armed vessels of the republic not to molest any vessels going to or from the island.

Mr. Morris continued to hold his position till the year 1809. During the last part of that period he was unwell, and more than once was absent for his health. On the 29th October of that year, a few hours after he had landed from a trip to the mainland, he died. During the time that he was superintendent there were known to have been lost on the island four ships, four brigs and seven schooners. Of the fate of the unknown we have a hint in such a statement as the following from one of his reports: "Found several pieces of new broken boards, new painted handspokes, tampions for cannon, a stand for a grindstone, trucks for running rigging, spars, etc., which gave me reason to suppose some vessel had been lost. Consequently I took a horse and examined every part of the island on the north and south beaches, but saw nothing more except a potash barrel on the northwest bar, new made, and one head branded 'First sort potash, J. Bouthellier, Montreal.'"

V. HISTORY OF RELIEF ESTABLISHMENT CONTINUED, 1809-1848.

Mr. Morris was succeeded by Edward Hodgson, who had been his assistant almost from the commencement of the establishment. He continued in charge till his death in 1830. The work was carried on under him much as it was under his predecessor. But it was increased in efficiency. On the 18th March, 1812, the commissioners report to the legislature that their means were inadequate. Though the grant continued the same, it would seem that improvements were made in the service. Haliburton, writing about 1827, mentions that the staff consisted, beside the superintendent, of his three sons on wages and four or five others; that two buildings were erected, one on the north side and the other on the south side, uninhabited, containing a supply of provisions, apparatus for obtaining fire, flint, steel, tinder-box and matches, and directions for reaching the house of the superintendent.

A vessel sent from Halifax was said to visit the island twice a year, but it was complained that this was not sufficient, and on some occasions the supplies ran short. Writing in 1816 (after describing a wreck the November previous), the latter says: "We had sixteen people to maintain all winter, which has made our provisions run very short. We have not had a bit of bread this long time, and ate up all our turnips and potatoes, so that we have none left for seed. I wish, sir, that you would send Capt. Darby or some other vessel as soon as possible, as we are in a starving condition. We have had no kind of small stores this long time. The boat made two attempts" (*i. e.*, to reach the mainland), "but was obliged to return."

During Mr. Hodgson's incumbency there was the usual number of wrecks, some of them of interest. Perhaps the most noteworthy was the loss of the French frigate "L'Africaine," in 1822, in which were two hundred men, who were all saved by the boats of the establishment after her own were stove in. In acknowledgment of the services rendered, Louis XVIII. sent a gift of a silver cup filled with gold coin and a medal struck for the occasion to the superintendent and his men. This was followed in the next year by the loss of the brigs "Hope" and "Marshal Wellington." In these three vessels there was said to have been in all four hundred and twenty-nine souls, who, it is asserted, would all have perished but for the men connected with the establishment. Noteworthy also was the loss, in the year 1812, of H. M. ship "Barbadoes," with a schooner and sloop under her convoy, all of which went ashore on the north side of the island near the east station.

Of another vessel we have the brief record: "On the 25th October the snow "Adamant" ran on shore on the north side of the island, full of water. On the 26th hauled on shore with ropes five out of a crew of thirteen. Four we found dead on deck, who had died from want of food and water. Those saved were very sick and frostbitten."

Equally sad is the following: "June 5, 1820.—We have had a tolerable winter, and no wrecks, except the hull of a schooner, the "Juno" of Plymouth, a fishing vessel, that came on shore the 20th November, without masts, sails or rigging of any description, and no person on board except one dead man in the hold, whom we got out and buried."

Mr. Hodgson carried on the cultivation of the soil as his predecessor had done, but seemingly with more success, for we find him reporting one season that he had raised two hundred bushels of potatoes, and plenty of cabbages, turnips, parsnips and carrots, for their own consumption, though another year he complains of all his vegetables having been much blighted by the wind.

He died in the year 1830. During the time he was in charge there were wrecked upon the island two frigates, seven ships, thirteen brigs, eleven schooners and one sloop, in all thirty-four, or perhaps two or three more.

Mr. Hodgson was succeeded by Capt. Joseph Darby. He had been in the habit of visiting the island almost from the commencement of the government establishment upon it. From 1807 or earlier to 1811 he commanded the vessel by which communication was maintained with the island. During the years 1812-13 he served in the "Phœbe" and "Shannon" and in the dockyard at Halifax. From 1813 to 1830, as master of his own vessel, he was employed by the government of Nova Scotia in the service of this establishment. He was thus well acquainted with the island and the work required, and being a thorough seaman was well qualified for the duties of his position.

Of his work during the first seven years of his incumbency, from November, 1830, to November, 1837, he thus reports. During that time there were lost three ships, ten brigs, and four schooners. One ship with passengers was got off uninjured, with the assistance of the establishment. From three brigs and one schooner nothing was saved but the crews. The other twelve had nearly all their rigging, sails, boats, anchors and cables saved. Altogether, two hundred and eighty-three seamen and passengers were saved, together with their baggage, and goods to the value of £14,000 sterling. There had been shipped, as the produce of the island, one hundred and fifty-six horses, fifty-seven barrels of oil, forty-four barrels of skins, five wrecked boats, two barrels of horsehair, and several lots of old iron. Of the improvements made he mentions that a small vessel had been built, which had run

more than two years, during which she had made eleven trips to Halifax; also four large copper-fastened boats and two small ones for the use of the establishment, and twenty-seven buildings of different sizes. Eight two-wheeled carts had been constructed and two old ones thoroughly repaired, thirty thousand shingles manufactured and two thousand feet of boards sawn for the use of the establishment, two large flagstuffs erected and one small one, direction-boards set up in various places, and eight or ten acres inclosed with fences. They had raised during that time about two thousand bushels of vegetables, five thousand six hundred pounds of pork, fourteen thousand pounds of beef, collected four hundred and twenty cords of wood, and made seven thousand copper nails.

In like manner, he reports in the year 1844 the work done during the previous seven years. There had been wrecked during that time upon the island ten ships, two brigs and four schooners, from which had been saved one hundred and thirteen passengers and one hundred and seventy-nine seamen, with their baggage. There had been shipped, as produce of the island, fifty-eight horses, thirty-four casks of oil and twenty-seven barrels of skins. There had been raised one thousand eight hundred bushels of vegetables, eight thousand pounds of pork and thirteen thousand of beef. A hundred thousand shingles had been manufactured, twenty-six thousand feet of boards sawn and four hundred cords of wood collected. Of the improvements he mentions that he had built three warehouses for wrecked goods and four small buildings for various purposes, and assisted in putting up two large buildings for castaway seamen; that he had erected one flagstaff sixty-five feet high, with look-out, and built a new lifeboat, etc.

About the same time he mentions that he had constructed "a portable wharf of fifty feet long, standing on two pair of wheels, with a capstan to heave it out of the water, and a house built over it." We have no doubt that this was a most ingenious construction, but we never hear of any attempt to put it to practical use.

From 1844 to 1847 the number of lives saved was one hundred and thirty-eight, making altogether seven hundred and thirteen from the time of his appointment in 1830.

With these known wrecks there were the usual number of unknown, indicated by such records in his journal as the following:

"April 6.—A man went round the northwest bar and found a new pump belonging to some small vessel, the upper part painted white, also part of a new chair, bottom painted black-mahogany colour, with bright yellow rings round the legs.

"15th.—A boat came ashore on the northeast bar having in it five seal gaffs, two peajackets, two pieces of boiled pork, two spruce oars having J. Herald branded on them." (This probably had merely gone adrift from some fishing vessel.)

"27th.—Found a man's leather cap trimmed with sealskin."

One of the most interesting incidents of Capt. Darby's incumbency was the saving of a captain and crew of a vessel by the casting of oil upon the troubled waters. We give the particulars, condensed from a report of his at the time:

"All of a sudden we saw an object to the north side dead to windward, which we at first thought was a large bird, but shortly after discovered that it was a sail, distant five or six miles, and that she was running down right before this tremendous gale dead on a lee shore." . . . "We could see that she was a schooner with a close-reefed mainsail set, steering directly for our flagstaff." . . . "The sea was breaking everywhere off the north side as far as the eye could see, and it appeared almost incredible that any vessel could

live to come so great a distance through such mountains of broken water. I got a rope prepared to assist in preserving the people's lives, should the vessel be able to reach the beach. When she approached within three miles of the land she appeared to be in the heaviest breakers, and we could plainly perceive mountain waves on each side of her, that would raise their heads as high as the top of her masts and pitch over and fall with the weight of hundreds of tons, either of which would have been sufficient to have smashed her to atoms. But, miraculous as it may appear, not one of them touched her. At one moment you could just perceive the heads of her masts between the mountains of water that were smashing and breaking to pieces all around, but not permitted to hurt her; at the next moment you would see her on the top of a tremendous wave, which appeared like certain destruction to her; at another you would see a mountain sea rising up before her, and breaking all to fragments in her path, but when she arrived at the spot the surface was smooth as glass. When she arrived within one mile of shore she had to pass over what we call the Outer Bay, where every sea broke from the bottom, and our greatest anxiety for the safety of the vessel was at this point. The sea was then breaking with tremendous violence, but she passed through untouched—the sea became smooth before her, and she left a shining track behind.” . . .

“When she approached a little nearer we could see one man lashed to the helm, and two men forward lashed by each of the foreshrouds, and by each man a large cask standing on end. We could also see that the two men were making great exertions with their arms, as if throwing something up in the wind. The vessel had now passed the most dangerous place, and her safety seemed certain. Another half mile brought her to the beach, and her bow struck the sand.” . . .

“The schooner was the ‘Arno,’ Capt. Higgins, with twelve men, from Quero Bank, where they had been fishing. They left the bank at the commencement of the gale. He had lost all his headsails, when at daylight this morning he made the land dead under his lee, with the gale blowing right on shore. The vessel having no headsail, he could do nothing with her on a wind. He let go his anchor in twenty fathoms of water, paid out three hundred fathoms of hemp cable, and brought the vessel head to wind. In that tremendous sea he held on till noon, when, seeing no prospect of the gale abating, he cut his cable and put the vessel before the wind, preferring to run her on shore before night to riding there and foundering at her anchor. He lashed himself to the helm, sent all his men below but two, and nailed up the cabin doors. He had two large casks placed near the foreshrouds and lashed there. He then directed his two best men to station themselves there, and lash themselves firmly to the casks, which were partly filled with blubber and oil from the fish. They had each a wooden ladle about two feet long, and with those ladles they dipped up the blubber and oil and threw it up in the air as high as they could. The great violence of the wind carried it far to leeward, and, spreading over the water, made the surface smooth before her, and left a shining path behind, and although the sea would rise very high, yet the top of it was smooth and never broke where the oil was. It was raging, pitching and breaking close to her on each side, but not a barrel of water fell upon her deck the whole distance.”

Capt. Darby seems undoubtedly to have been a man of great capacity and immense energy, and the duties of his position he seems to have discharged in an efficient manner. But various complaints regarding the way in which matters were managed reached the ears

of those in authority. As early as 1836 they found it necessary to make an investigation, with the result of acquitting him of blame. Rumours, however, still prevailed and as years passed became more clamant and assumed more definite form. In the year 1848, responsible government was established and a reform government came into power. The energy of Mr. Howe infused a new life into every department of public affairs. Light was being thrown into obscure corners, sleepy officials were being awakened to new activity, and abuses which had been sanctioned by time and usage were being exposed and rectified. By this time the allegations regarding the state of things on Sable Island were so widespread and so positive as to urgently call for investigation.

The government first sent Capt. W. T. Townshend to examine into the state of matters on the island. His report does not indicate any want of efficiency in the service, but brought out a number of matters that led to the appointment of a committee of the executive council to make a thorough investigation into the whole condition of the establishment. At the outset of their inquiries they were met by the palpable fact that the superintendent and the commissioners, not one of whom had ever visited the island, were on such terms that it was impossible for the two to work in harmony, and that his relations with at least some of his subordinates were not happy. On other matters they entered into a full investigation, many witnesses being examined. It is unnecessary at this date to enter into details of their inquiries. It is sufficient to say that the government came to the conclusion that a change was necessary. The old commissioners were superseded and soon after the management of the institution was placed under the charge of the Board of Works. Capt. Darby was discharged, and left the island in November, 1848, after having been eighteen years in charge.

One other matter attracted attention at this time which must be referred to as an addition to the tales of horror of which this island has been the scene. At that time there was no lunatic asylum in the province, and indeed institutions for the insane, which employed kindness in the treatment of this unfortunate class, were only beginning to be established anywhere. Everywhere they were treated with a brutality that is now scarcely credible. For some time there had been rumours of such being sent by friends in Nova Scotia to Sable Island, where they were detained, and treated either with neglect or cruelty. When therefore Capt. Townshend was sent down he was instructed to make inquiry into the truth of these allegations, and particularly whether any were detained contrary to their will. He found two instances in which insane persons had been sent to the island, and remained there for a time, who were now removed. But he found one who had been on the island for seventeen years. He was a man of respectable family, heir to some property, and his guardians of the highest standing in the community. According to the report of parties on the island, he was for the first ten years extremely violent and troublesome, so that very harsh measures had to be adopted toward him, but for the last four years he had been quiet, inoffensive and useful, and was now employed carrying wood and water, and otherwise doing the drudgery of the kitchen. Capt. Townshend found him in such a state of helpless and hopeless idiocy as to be unable to give an intelligent answer to the question whether he was detained on the island against his will. And yet he learned that when this man was sent to the island, the commissioners had received a note from the administrator of the government, authorizing them to permit him to proceed to the island and remain there in the capacity of *schoolmaster* or any other capacity that might be agreed on.

The committee of the executive council took evidence and reported in the strongest terms of condemnation of the treatment he had received, "left unvisited and uncared for seventeen years, the drudge and butt of the establishment, squalid and half clad, beaten and taunted till every attribute of manhood was crushed."

VI. LIFE ON THE ISLAND—SUPERINTENDENCY OF M. D. McKENNA, 1848-1855.

Capt. Darby was succeeded by Capt. Matthew D. McKenna, who arrived on the island on the 8th November, 1848, and immediately entered upon the duties of his office, which he continued to discharge till September, 1855. He was simply the man for the place. Any disorder existing was soon removed, and the whole system brought to the highest state of efficiency.

As we have before us his journal during the whole of his incumbency, it enables us to give a view of the working of the whole system, and of the life of those employed about it. This will serve as a description of the state of things not only under his incumbency, but under that of his predecessors and his successors up to the present time.

The main establishment was on the north side about five miles from the west end of the island, now, however, covered by the sea. Here was a dwelling-house for the superintendent and another for the men, a large building known as the "sailors' home," for receiving shipwrecked mariners or others, a warehouse for storing shipwrecked goods, a large barn and stable, a forge and carpenter's shop, an oil-house, and a number of outbuildings. Here was a flagstaff with an observatory on it, called the Crow's-nest, 120 feet high. During Mr. McKenna's incumbency Capt. Marryat's code of signals was introduced. Nine miles to the eastward, at the foot of the lake, was a dwelling-house, occupied by one family and sometimes by two, with a barn and flagstaff. Five miles east of this was the east station, where were a house and barn occupied as the last, and also a flagstaff. On the south side was a hut, unoccupied, intended as a house of refuge for sailors who might be cast upon the island. The door was simply latched. In it was a fireplace with wood. Alongside was apparatus for producing fire, at this time tinder with flint and steel, now superseded by boxes of friction matches. A bag of provisions was suspended from the wall beyond the reach of rats. Written directions were posted up telling the way to the stations and how fresh water might be obtained by digging in the sand. During Mr. McKenna's incumbency another house of the same kind was erected at the east end of the island.

The importance of this arrangement will appear from the following incident recorded by him :

"The 'Nisibis' of St. Johns, N. F., Hallahan master, struck on the N. E. bar on the night of the 18th January, during a most violent gale of wind, and almost instantly filled with water. The crew clung to the wreck till eight o'clock the next morning, when they cut away the foremast, and getting on the floating spars were miraculously thrown on shore.

"The gale raged with such violence throughout the whole of the 19th, that it was next to impossible for our men to go the rounds; and if these poor fellows had not had a fair wind, and the house of refuge in their road (where they made a fire and warmed themselves and got bread to eat), some of them at least would certainly have perished before they could have got to the eastern station, the distance of it from the wreck being seven miles."

And yet there were men, seafaring men too, capable of robbing such a refuge of its contents. More than once the superintendent had to complain of the crews of fishing

vessels, some of them American, but some of them Nova Scotian, landing for plunder. Generally, the objects sought were the fittings of vessels wrecked. But on one occasion he had to complain of men robbing the house of refuge of the fireworks, and an axe, of their taking down the directions for the guidance of shipwrecked persons, of their taking the latch off the door, and robbing the boats which he was using in saving wrecked goods.

The staff consisted generally of ten men and a foreman, beside the superintendent. Of these one was a blacksmith, and another a carpenter, who was also boat-builder and wheelwright. But these men took their share in the ordinary work of the establishment, particularly in anything connected with wrecks.

At the principal station each man in his turn rose early, and after making on the fire, if the day was clear mounted the flagstaff to the Crow's-nest, and made a survey of the island, all of which is visible from this point, to ascertain if any vessel had come ashore during the night. If there had, the word was immediately given, and all the men prepared with their boats to set out for the spot. If not they prepared for other duties. If, however, the weather was foggy, or if there had been a storm, they prepared to patrol the shores. Mounted on a hardy pony a man set out from each station, east and west, sometimes in the face of a fierce blast, with it might be snow, hail or rain, or driving the sand so as to make his face smart, so that he was sometimes glad to take shelter behind a sand-dune and proceed along the central valley, ever and anon crossing the sand-hills to look seaward, or descending to the landwash to examine some object cast on shore, or floating in the surf, it might be a spar, a bottle or an oar. At length he met the roundsman from the next station. They exchanged notes, retraced their steps and reported the result at headquarters. They thus made the whole circuit of the island. When the weather was so thick that they could not see over the island, this was done every twenty-four hours. In bad weather this watching of the beach engaged their whole attention.

During fine weather the men were not idle. There was always work to be done. There was the daily work of attending to the horses and cattle, while each season had its proper employment. During the summer all the ordinary operations of the farm were carried on: fencing, putting out manure, ploughing, sowing, weeding, cutting, making and housing hay, gathering the other crops, making compost, etc. Then there was the repair of buildings, cleaning and whitewashing, the repairing and painting, and sometimes building boats, the repairing vehicles or making new ones, repairing saddles, harness, etc., hauling supplies to the outstations, gathering wood and hauling it to the central station. Then there was the gathering of cranberries, of which as much as 100 barrels have been shipped at one time, and the autumn pursuit of birds. At other times there was fishing, though the superintendent, from the uncertainty of the winds and sea, was very cautious about allowing his men to go out for this purpose. But sometimes they met with good hauls. On one occasion he speaks of their taking 246 fine codfish. Sometimes they took a few halibut, but mackerel were at that time especially abundant all around the island. Over forty American vessels have been seen at one time fishing for them, some of which have been known to take three full fares in a season.

A time of some excitement, particularly with the young, was the time of gathering the wild horses. For this purpose a pound is erected at the shore, from near the entrance of which wing fences extend in opposite directions. Men on horseback drive a gang into the inclosure. Then entering they select the victim and throw a noose over his head, by which he

is brought to the ground. Then loosing the rope to prevent his choking altogether, they hitch a rope round his jaw in the form know as a bonaparte. The animals do not attempt to jump the inclosure, and it is seldom that they are vicious. They generally submit quietly and are led or dragged to the shore. It is great fun for the youngsters to have the first ride on a wild horse. They may be thrown, but as their fall will be on the sand, they fear no hurt. At the shore the animals' legs being tied they are put into a boat, and afterwards hoisted into the vessel and lowered into the hold.

Some winters the men spent a good deal of their time in sawing up the timber cast upon the island or splitting it into shingles. Thus he records on one occasion: "All hands overhauling and measuring lumber, and find that we have sawed since the 15th December eight thousand five hundred and forty-eight feet merchantable, and one thousand two hundred and nine of refuse boards, also one hundred and twenty-one fence rails, sixty-four posts, and made eleven thousand shingles and one thousand pickets." Then there are the numberless small jobs suited for indoor work, necessarily connected with such an establishment.

As the winter is passing away comes the hunting the seal, followed by the trying out the oil, though this business has never been very extensive. Then comes the shooting of wild fowl, and a little later collecting their eggs.

Incidents occur out of the ordinary to vary the monotony of their life. Thus on two occasions he mentions the fact of a whale coming ashore. In the first case it was stranded within half a mile of the principal station. After they had taken three cartloads of blubber from it the sea carried off the remainder of the carcass, which again came ashore at another point, when they again commenced securing the blubber. A second time it was carried off by the sea and again brought back, when they were able to take off all the blubber that remained. The second was not secured.

Then attention is arrested by vessels passing, some stopping to communicate with the shore, or approaching it unconscious of danger, as appears from such entries as the following: "The man that went eastward reports having seen a fore-and-aft schooner nearly on shore, the sea breaking outside of her." "J. C. says that he had seen a brig among the breakers on the northeast bar, that after crossing the bar, on which he thinks she must have struck, she stood to the northward."

One of the events which serves best to relieve the monotony of their lives is the arrival of the vessel with supplies. In the year 1851 the government had a vessel built for their own purposes, called the "Daring." She was employed principally for the protection of the fisheries, but part of her business was to keep up communication with Sable island. Though the men being fully employed did not usually feel the time tedious, and were generally satisfied with the quiet of their situation; it was at least an agreeable change to be again brought into communication with the outside world, to receive messages of love from dear ones left behind, or tidings of the changes which have occurred in private circles or in public affairs during, it may be, the months that have elapsed since last they held intercourse with any outside their isle. At times she brought visitors, whose company served to enliven the loneliness of their situation. Sometimes, however, the weather was such as to render landing so difficult and dangerous, that she sometimes returned without communicating except by signal. Thus he writes on one occasion: "After answering her inquiries by signal, that a boat could not get off—that we were all well and had no wrecks—were not

in want of provisions, and had nothing to communicate, she made sail." At other times, after landing part of the supplies or taking on board some of the goods for shipment, and after laying off and on for two or three days, she would leave on her return. Thus, under date 27th October, 1849, he writes :

"At 11 a.m. the 'Daring' came to anchor abreast of the flagstaff, and we boarded her and began to land our supplies. We continued landing until 6 p.m., when from the violence of the sea we had to quit, having got one boat filled with surf, and a barrel of sugar destroyed and several other things much injured, and our large boat set a-leaking.

"N.B.—The supplies landed this day were in very bad condition. We hauled our boat up, and the 'Daring' weighed anchor and stood off for the night. But the next day she sailed for Halifax."

There are indeed times when, as has been said, a lad might land on a flat, but even in fine weather and with the wind off shore the vessel must lie to the wind, with her anchor apeak, and her mainsail set, ready to run at a moment's notice. Even then the landing requires the utmost skill of the seamen, particularly the steersman, and has sufficient spice of danger to render the scene exciting. Men and horses dot the beach ready to help, and eagerly watching the approaching boat. All hold their breath, as the crew bend to their oars, the helmsman standing high on the pointed stern and keeping her true. Riding on the back of a huge wave, she is carried up on the beach in a mass of struggling water. To spring from their seats into the water and hold hard the boat, now on the point of being swept back by the receding wave, is the work of an instant. Another moment and they are left high and dry on the beach, another and the returning wave and a vigorous run of the crew has borne her high and dry.

On one occasion his family were in serious danger. His wife, with twin infants, had returned from Nova Scotia. Anxious to land, they got into the boat while there was considerable sea. As they approached the shore the boat nearly filled with water, and if it had not been for the admirable skill and power of the steersman, together with the efforts of the men on the shore, they would all have been lost.

The difficulty and at times the danger of landing may be seen by another incident. Among the records in Halifax is an affidavit of James Millar that, being in the employment of the custom-house, he was engaged to go to the island to take charge of some wrecked goods, that he obtained leave of absence for fourteen days, that he sailed on the 22nd November in the schooner "Elizabeth," that they made the island, when three of the men attempting to land were lost, leaving on board only the petitioner and one other man, that the latter, being a seafaring man, asserted that it was impossible for the vessel either to get safely to the island or to reach Halifax, that in consequence he steered for the West Indies, and arrived at Antigua after many dangers and privations. There he was forced to remain till he could get a passage to Halifax.

The most exciting event to the whole of this little community is the occurrence of a wreck or a vessel going ashore. Sometimes there would be a twelvemonth without such an occurrence, and on another occasion two vessels came ashore the same night. When such an event is reported there is a hurrying of all the men on duty to the spot. Horses are saddled and mounted, or harnessed to the car on which the boat is to be drawn. Speedily they are away to the scene at a rate which would indicate a suspension of the rules of the society for the suppression of cruelty to animals. If the vessel has gone ashore in moderate

weather, she may be got off without material damage, with the assistance of the men connected with the establishment, or even without. Thus, he writes under date 23rd May, 1855 :

"At 7 a. m. a gentleman came, with four seamen, to headquarters, and reported himself to be the surgeon of the steamship 'Union,' of and for New York from Havre, via Cowes, with seventy-five passengers, which vessel had run ashore on the north side of the island last night at midnight. Got out the lifeboat as soon as possible, and pulling westward found the ship lying within one hundred yards of the beach, head off shore, about one mile to the westward of the principal station, with a kedge and warp ahead. The ship's company, with their own boats, carried out a bower anchor, and having the ship considerably lightened by throwing over coal last night, we made preparations for heaving her off at high tide. Our boat landed about forty of the passengers, who went to headquarters and got some refreshments. At noon set all sail, and having two anchors ahead with warps to the windlass and capstan, and a full head of steam on the engine, and having thrown a chain cable overboard to lighten the ship, we made an effort to move her, and at 1 p. m. got her afloat. We then cut and shipped the warps, sent two of the ship's boats and an island boat to fetch off the passengers, and at 2 p. m. the ship steamed away for New York. The outpost men all came to render assistance."

But if she has struck during a storm, or when the sea is heavy, or if she has struck on either bar, this is not possible. The first care then is the saving of the lives of those on board. This is often accomplished in the boats of the vessel before the arrival of the men from the relief establishment. In that case the latter have only to see to their being brought to the main station and their wants attended to there. If they have not been landed, this, of course, must be the first care. Now there is a mortar from which a line can be thrown over the missing vessel, and a life-car and bretches buoy for the landing of crews. But at that time they relied mainly on their boats for the purpose, though sometimes, when the vessel was near the shore, the men waded out into the surf and drew them ashore with ropes.

When the shipwrecked have been housed and their wants attended to, as soon as the weather is fit, the men, under the direction of the superintendent, are set to work to strip the vessel of her sails, rigging, etc., which are conveyed to the warehouse. The next object is the saving of as much of the cargo as possible. Sometimes the vessel will go to pieces in less than forty-eight hours, in which case some wreckage strewed along the beach will be all that will remain. But generally when she has struck on the island itself she does not break up for some time, and then for weeks, all the time that the weather and sea are such that they can work at her, all the men of the establishment will be employed in saving material and cargo and hauling it to the warehouse at the main station. Finally, as the ship breaks up, their time may be employed in saving the iron and copper that entered into her construction.

The shipwrecked crews and passengers were comfortably housed and well fed till either the government vessel arrived or some other vessel touched at the island by which they could obtain a passage. This might be weeks or months. As many as two hundred such have been accommodated, and, except in some of the early days of the establishment, there has never been a deficiency in the supply of provisions.

Such an institution, one would think, could not possibly awaken anything but gratitude in those that had experienced its benefits. But, strange to say, the superintendent had

trouble, and perhaps his worst trouble, in the conduct of men who might be said to have owed their lives to the existence of the establishment. On one occasion he had much difficulty with a captain who remained after his crew had been removed. Sometimes he manifested unmistakable indications of insanity, at other times as unmistakable indications of diabolical wickedness, exciting some of the men to mutiny, and threatening even to shoot the superintendent, who had no end of trouble watching him and keeping all guns out of his reach, till a vessel arrived by which he had him shipped from the island.

At another time the crew of a vessel which had been wrecked off the east point of the island mutinied, not only refusing to work, but using the most abusive language to the superintendent and the captain; complaining of the provisions, demanding more grog, though they received two glasses a day when working, and uttering dire threats, one of them even lifting up an axe to the former. His firmness prevented their going to the extremities they threatened. But as such a state of things could not continue, he boarded a vessel which came to off the main station, and hired the captain to carry a letter to the Board of Works at Halifax, informing them of the condition of matters. On the fifth day after a vessel arrived with Lieut. Lyndsay and some blue-jackets, sent down by the admiral, who soon bundled the whole sixteen on board and removed them from the island. We may mention here that no liquor is now allowed on the island. Persons addicted to drink, or their friends for them, have therefore sometimes requested from government the privilege of residing on it.

Of saddest interest are those fragments found by men on their rounds, which too truly tell of the total loss of gallant vessels, of their crews engulfed by the raging sea, from which no tidings ever come to friends who, far off, wait for those who shall return no more. A few memoranda of this kind may be of interest as showing part of their daily life:

"18th January, 1850.—Superintendent went to the northeast bar and returned. While gone he examined some spars and rigging picked up by F. in December, and found them to be the topmasts and foretopgallant mast of a brig, with foretopgallant mast rigging and backstays and topgallant rigging attached. The spars and rigging are both quite new.

"4th.—Found a piece of wreck on the south beach quite new, also chips from a large spar painted black.

"26th November, 1852.—The superintendent searched the northeast bar, and found the quarterdeck of a small vessel, deck plank pine, about twelve inches wide and middle seamed," etc.

"7th October, 1853.—At 1 p. m. discovered a square-rigged vessel off the south side, apparently waterlogged, and standing toward the island under short sail, but whether a ship- or barque-rigged vessel could not be distinctly made out through the rain and haze, and at 3 o'clock p. m. we lost sight of her, the weather having grown quite thick.

"8th.—Sent two men to search the south beach and one to search the north beach and the northwest bar, who report having found a quantity of new spruce deals on the northwest bar and on both sides of the island, but the greater quantity on the north side. In the afternoon three of the men came home from the northeast bar, and reported the north beach, at the eastern end of the island, to be strewn with spruce deals to the number of some hundreds, from which there is reason to fear that the vessel seen yesterday has been on the northwest bar.

"11th.—In the afternoon the men came home from the east end, having piled up what deals were on the beach, and reported having found a ship's boat on the south side and a head-board with 'Plymouth' on it.

"30th.—At 5 p. m. got a report from the eastern station of the family there having heard the report of several heavy cannon in the neighbourhood of that station at about 2 o'clock on the morning of the 27th."

Sometimes these fragments will contain some mark to tell of the vessel to which they belonged, and thus reveal her fate. On one occasion they picked up the head-board of a vessel, on which some of the letters were so injured that they could not clearly make out the name. The superintendent ordered it to be preserved, and some time after they read in a paper of a vessel called "The Polar Star" having never been heard of after sailing. On examining the head-board again it appeared plainly that that was the name upon it.

"11th.—Sent one man to search the northwest bar, who reports having found the stern of a small vessel on the south beach, with a water-cask and tiller lashed to it.

"13th.—The superintendent, with three men, went to the piece of wreck found on Saturday, and, clearing away the sand with a shovel, found 'Resolution, St. Johns, N. F.,' in yellow letters on the stern.

"22nd.—Searched the north beach east and west, and found two broken barrels of flour, and the forward part of a new jollyboat, cedar plank, iron-fastened and painted white. She appeared to have been cut through by a vessel running foul of the one to which she belonged."

It is to be observed, however, that the tendency of the currents is not to bring such wreckage ashore, but rather to carry it to sea. It is seldom, too, that bodies come ashore.

Though the life of the residents on this island is thus of a somewhat solitary and monotonous nature, yet, being one of activity, it is not wearisome or depressing. On the contrary, it has much of interest in it, and often they become attached to the island as to their home. When the superintendency is vacant there is no lack of applicants for the position, and Mr. McKenna found that employes who left the island were in almost all cases desirous of getting back. Children who have lived on the island, when taken away to school, have had a homesick longing after the old scenes, and imagined their happiness would be perfect, if they could just have a scamper over the sand on the back of a shaggy Sable island pony. Fond recollections of such delights lingered in their minds amid the gayest scenes and to the end of life.

One of the most important events to the island during the superintendency of Mr. McKenna was the visit of Miss Dix in 1853. In the prosecution of her lifework of founding institutions for the insane she had come to Halifax and St. Johns, N. F. While at the latter city, in June, there occurred a fearful storm, resulting in some appalling shipwrecks, which left a deep impression upon her, and, with her practical and sympathetic nature, induced the desire to adopt some means for the safety of those exposed to such terrible gales. At Halifax the gentleman who was her chief supporter in her efforts to found an asylum for the insane was the Hon. Hugh Bell. By a subscription, large for his circumstances, he first tapped the fountains of private liberality on its behalf. He was its earnest advocate in the legislature. Through him Miss Dix carried on her correspondence regarding the project, and as the chairman of the Board of Works he had the charge of carrying it into execution. But in the same capacity he had the special oversight of the establishment on Sable island.

In her intercourse with him she could not but have learned somewhat of the sad events of which it had been the theatre, and of the institution established by the Nova Scotia government. She could scarcely have missed hearing also of the additional tales of horror, of maniacs sent there by their friends to linger out a miserable existence, and to suffer treatment which, though common everywhere at that time, never failed to move her sympathy. Her experience perhaps led her to suspect that there might be something of the kind still going on there. At all events she proceeded to Sable island in the government vessel, where she arrived on the 26th July. The weather was moderate, and there was no difficulty in landing. She spent the two following days on the island. In that short period she had the opportunity of seeing a wreck. The last of these days set in with fresh southwest winds, thick fog and a heavy sea on the south side. About 7 a. m. the schooner "Guide" of London, 132 tons, Henry Millichamp master, from New York, with a cargo of flour, pork, beef, molasses, pitch and tobacco, bound for Labrador, while running E.N.E. under full sail, struck on the inner bar on the south side. At 9 a. m. she was discovered ashore abreast of the main station, and all hands proceeded thither. The sea being too heavy to run out an anchor or to do anything toward getting the vessel off, it was deemed advisable to make sail on her and run a cable and anchor ahead on the beach to assist her onward, in the hope of saving the ship's material and cargo. This being done, the crew were landed in the surf-boats, and at 7 p. m. came to headquarters, bringing most of their clothes with them. But here an incident occurred manifesting the spirit of her old mission. It is thus given in part of a letter published in her life:

"The ship was abandoned by all but the captain. He had become a raving maniac, and would not leave. Miss Dix rode to the beach on horseback, as the last boat landed from the ill-fated vessel, and learned the sad fate of the commander, who, the sailors said, was a kindhearted man. She pled with them to return to the wreck and bring him on shore, and to bind him if it was necessary for his safety. They obeyed her summons, and soon were again on the beach, with their captain bound hand and foot. She loosened the cords, took him by the arm and led him to a boathouse built for the shipwrecked, and there by kind words calmed his mind and persuaded him to thank the sailors for saving his life. She trusted that rest and nourishing food would restore him to reason."

She left the island, and from the manner in which he is spoken of afterward we conclude that her expectation was realized.

During this short visit Miss Dix had carefully observed the state of things on the island. While admiring much that she saw of the arrangements, and gratified at the results, she yet saw that the life-saving apparatus was far behind the age. The legislature of Nova Scotia had manifested no deficiency of liberality, and the British government had been ready to respond to any appeals made for its help. But she found, and the fact is not creditable to the authorities of Nova Scotia, that the establishment had no lifeboats of modern pattern, but heavy, clumsy surf-boats, utterly unfitted for heavy seas. Besides there was no mortar for throwing a line across a wrecked vessel, and no provision of cars or bretches-buoys for landing crews. As soon, therefore, as she arrived home she appealed to friends in Boston, New York and Philadelphia to supply means to provide three lifeboats, one for each of these cities, with other necessary apparatus. Her appeal met with a ready response, and, under the direction of Capt. R. B. Forbes, then chairman of the Humane Society of Boston, four first-class metallic lifeboats were built in New York, and were

respectively named the "Victoria" of Boston, the "Grace Darling" of Philadelphia, and the "Reliance" and the "Samaritan" of New York, with a car called the Rescue. With them were provided a mortar, cables, trucks, harness, etc.

They were all ready by the 25th of November, and were publicly exhibited on Wall street, attracting great attention by their beauty and strength. It was Miss Dix's desire that the entire fleet should be at once despatched by sailing vessel to Halifax, thence, when opportunity offered, to be transferred to Sable island. But Capt. Forbes objected to this as "putting all his eggs in one basket," and insisted on sending the "Victoria" in one of the Cunard steamers. It was accompanied by the following note from Miss Dix:

"NEW YORK, November 28, 1853.

"To His Excellency Sir John Gaspard Le Marchant, K.C.B., Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, etc.

"I have the honour and pleasure of consigning by this writing to your Excellency a lifeboat, the 'Victoria' of Boston, for the use of Sable island, and which, with its appendages, is a gift to me for this sole purpose from Hon. Abbot Lawrence, Hon. Jonathan Phillips, Col. T. H. Perkins, Hon. William Appleton, R. C. Harper, R. B. Forbes and G. N. Upton, Esqrs., all of Boston.

"To Mr. Forbes, who for courage and knowledge in nautical affairs has a wide reputation, I am especially obliged, since his judgment and experience have assisted me in effecting the completion of my wishes in this business in a satisfactory manner.

"D. L. DIX."

In a postscript she states that the Boston boat would very soon be followed by the New York and Philadelphia boats, with the outfits. Accordingly there was shipped on board the brig "Eleanora" three boats, two boat-wagons, one lifecar, the mortar, with suitable ammunition, coils of manilla rope, etc. She left New York on the 27th, and for some time nothing was heard of her. At length a letter was received from Halifax, dated the 16th January, 1854, bringing information that she had been totally wrecked at Cranberry Head, near Yarmouth; that one of the lifeboats had gone to sea and the others were badly broken. Miss Dix at once gave directions to have the broken boats, as well as the one which had been lost, but which had been afterward picked up at sea, with all the accoutrements, sent on to New York for thorough repair. She also sent orders that the "Victoria" should be retained at Halifax till the others should arrive. Long delays occurred, so that it was not till the 11th November following that the first two of them, the "Victoria" and "Reliance," and other apparatus reached the island. The former was housed on the south side, and the "Reliance" retained at the principal station. Little time elapsed till her services were in requisition. On the evening of the 26th, being Sabbath, at 6 p. m., a fine ship, the "Arcadia" of Warren, Maine, 715 tons, Wm. Jordan master, twenty-eight days from Antwerp, with a varied cargo and one hundred and forty-seven passengers and a crew of twenty-one men, struck on the southeast side of the northeast bar, in a dense fog, with the wind blowing strong from the south-southeast.¹

¹ The author of Miss Dix's life says that the lifeboats had arrived only the day before. But from the superintendent's journal it appears that this is a mistake. The "Victoria" and "Reliance" arrived on the 11th November, 1854, the "Grace Darling" not till the 18th April following.

The report was received at the main station at 9 a. m. on the 27th. Immediately the "Reliance" was manned and the small boats got ready. The wreck was twenty miles distant, and now was seen the advantage of the car-wagons. As quick as their hardy ponies could draw them the superintendent and all his men were at the scene of the wreck. They found her lying about two hundred yards from the shore, settled deep in the sand and listed seaward, with her lee side under water, main and mizzen masts gone by the deck, and a tremendous sea running and sweeping over her bows, rendering all chance of escape by the efforts of those on board utterly hopeless.

The "Reliance" was immediately launched, the crew took their stations and without delay started for the wreck. They had to contend with tremendous seas, strong currents and high winds, in which all agreed that the boats hitherto on the island could not have lived. But the "Reliance," as the sailors said, rode the waves like a duck, and after considerable time and effort they reached the side of the wreck. During the afternoon they made six trips to her, and brought ashore eighty persons, young and old. Two more attempts were made to reach the wreck, but the oars and thole-pins were broken by the violence of the sea, and the boat had to return to the beach. An attempt was made to send a warp from the ship to the shore, but the current ran at such a rate that it could not be accomplished. The men were now exhausted, their clothes freezing on them, and night was on, rendering any attempt to reach the wreck hopeless. The kindhearted superintendent was obliged to give orders to haul up the boat, but the scene which ensued he ever after spoke of as the most painful of his life. "When night came on, and we had to haul up our boat, the cries from those left on the wreck were truly heartrending. In the hurry of work families had been separated, and when those on shore heard the cries of those on the wreck at seeing the boat hauled up, a scene was witnessed that may be imagined but cannot be described. I walked slowly from the place, leading my horse, till by the roaring of the sea, the whistling of the wind and the distance I had travelled, their doleful cries could not be heard." What particularly affected him was that the wind seemed to be rising, and he feared the wreck would go to pieces before morning.

At dawn every man was at his post, and the lifeboat was launched as soon as it was clear enough to see the wreck. To their joyful surprise the wind had abated, and in ten trips, by 10 o'clock a. m., the crew and passengers were all safely landed. Capt. Jordan was knocked down by a sea and very severely cut and bruised, while the boat was making her second trip, but the mate, Mr. Collamore, did his part nobly. The island men exerted themselves to the utmost, the boat's crew nobly sticking to the boat, and declining the offer to be relieved for a time by some of the vessel's crew. As to the boat the superintendent says: "The 'Reliance' has done what no other boat could do that I have ever seen. It was a fearful time, yet the boat's crew each took their stations readily, and soon showed that they felt the 'Reliance' to be worthy of her name." On the night of the 29th the ship was broken into a thousand pieces, and only a few packages of cargo and some fragments of ship's material were saved.

The gallant conduct of Capt. McKenna and his men having been brought under the notice of the Mariners' Royal Benevolent Society of England, they by unanimous vote awarded to him the gold medal of the corporation and a silver one to each man serving under him.¹

¹ Tiffany's "Life of Miss Dix," pp. 213-226.

We should also mention here that Miss Dix having noticed the want of a library on the island, appealed to some of her friends and to liberal-minded booksellers in Boston, by whose joint gift she received several hundred volumes, which were forwarded thither, and we need not say have served a valuable purpose for the amusement and instruction of the residents, as well as the mariners who are constrained by necessity to abide there for a time.

It may be mentioned that in the early history of the establishment an offer from the American government to aid in its support was refused by the authorities of Nova Scotia, for no other reason that we can learn than the old grudge at the American people. By this time we are happy to say that Christianity had so far advanced that their assistance was not only received but highly valued.

During the superintendency of Mr. McKenna there were wrecked on the island four ships, three barques, seven brigs and ten schooners. And yet of their crews and passengers there was only one life lost. This was from a French Canadian schooner, the "Marie-Anne" of St. André. She came upon the shore nearly broadside. The men dropped from the bow into the water, and were drawn ashore with ropes by men from the station, to the number of seven, some of them frostbitten and insensible from cold. This man, who was the only one on board speaking English, seemed to lose his reason altogether, and finally jumped overboard at the stern, where the water was deeper. The advancing wave impelled him forward and the men saw him gain a footing, but the receding wave carried him beyond their reach. Strange to say, one man who had his leg broken was yet saved. There was, of course, no surgeon on the island, and the superintendent had to do the best he could in the way of setting the limb. The operation succeeded thoroughly, and the patient after some weeks left, with his thanks as heartily expressed to the superintendent's family as he was able to utter with his total unacquaintance with the English language. The number of lives saved in that time could not have been less than five hundred, probably more.

From his accounts we find that the wrecked goods saved and the island produce (horses, oil, cranberries, etc.) together, from April, 1849, to 22nd July, 1854, a little over six of the seven years he was in office, was valued at £14,247, or nearly \$57,000, over \$9,000 per annum. This did not include the effects of the crews and passengers, always the first to be saved, chronometers, or the value of wrecks sold. He does not separate the proceeds of wrecked goods from those of the island produce. But it is evident that all under the first category must have been clear gain, for previous to the establishment of this institution, while fishermen might gain by plundering a wreck on the island, the owners never expected to receive anything for her, while the produce of the island went far to pay the expenses of the establishment.

VII. TO THE PRESENT TIME, 1855-1894.

Mr. McKenna left the island on the 5th September, 1855, and was succeeded by Philip Dodd, Esq. We need not follow the narrative further. Life continued such as we have described it, and the incidents were of a similar character. We have chosen to exhibit the time when Mr. McKenna was superintendent, not to indicate his superiority to other men who have filled the same office, but simply because, having before us his journals during the whole time of his incumbency, and being at the same time in communication with a member of his family who resided with him on the island, we have been able to give an account of his work as we could not of the others. But the picture of life is equally true of times since. The system has continued the same or with some improvements.

Since the adoption of confederation in 1867 the establishment has been under the charge of the Dominion government. The most important change since that time has been the erection of two lighthouses, one near the west and the other near the east end of the island. At the first foundation of the establishment it was proposed to establish one or two lighthouses. Mr. Seth Colman, who was sent down to prepare the way, reported in favour of the erection of lighthouses of wood. We find the governor in 1802 corresponding with a party in Boston, seeking information and advice regarding the erection of such a structure. In the same year we find Morris, the first superintendent, in writing to the commissioners, expressing his surprise that none had ever been built, recommending the building of two and submitting plans. It continued to occupy the minds of the Nova Scotia authorities, for in the year 1808 we find Sir George Prevost, then governor, sending Lieut. Burton to the island to report on the subject, with the view of inducing the British government to erect or to aid in erecting, such a building. His report we have not seen.

We next hear of any movement on behalf of the project in 1833, when a commissioner was sent down to inquire into the practicability and advisability of building a lighthouse. He was favourable to the project, and selected a site for such an erection, but in 1837, four years after, Mr. J. P. Millar, being sent down on the same errand, found the spot selected by his predecessor entirely removed by the sea, and did not feel justified in recommending anything but a temporary structure, such as could easily be removed when necessary.

We find no further notices of the project till it was taken up by Mr. Howe in 1850. One reason was that many seafaring men were opposed to it. They believed that while there was no light it would be an inducement to voyagers to keep at a safe distance from the island, but that a light would encourage them to run for it, by which they would be lured among shoals and sand-bars. Others maintained that if two lights were established, one fixed and one revolving, which could be seen at a distance of twenty miles, it would be sufficient to warn vessels of their danger, and lead them to the proper measures to avoid it.

Mr. Howe, in his report, notwithstanding that the objections were held by Capt. Darby, the superintendent, and Mr. Cunard, maintained that it was strongly advisable that a light should be erected near the central station. He believed that vessels not bound for the island, nor driven there by currents nor stress of weather, would no more run for it than they did before; that they would, in fact, be likely to keep clear of it, as it was known to have no harbour; that vessels outward bound would not require a new point of departure, while those homeward bound had all the coast before them; and if made to revolve east and west it would show in what direction the bars lie. But nothing was done in the matter then or for some time after. Perhaps one reason for this was that Mr. McKenna, who succeeded Capt. Darby as superintendent, entertained the view that a light on the island would be useless or comparatively so. The wrecks occurred in fogs or in storms, and against these a light would be no safeguard.¹

In 1851 Lieut. Orlebar, who conducted the admiralty survey of the island, by command reported on the advisability of the project. He stated that he considered a lighthouse at the west end unnecessary for the general purposes of navigation, as the west bar could be safely approached by the lead from any direction, but that it would be useful to the fishing vessels which frequent the neighbourhood. He thinks there is more occasion for one at the east end; that the northeast bar extended fourteen miles; that the north side was steep,

¹ Mr. Howe's report will be found in the appendix to the Journals of the Assembly for 1852, p. 160.

thirty fathoms of water being found quite close to it; that not far from the end of the bar the depth amounted to one hundred and seventy fathoms, so that in a few minutes after trying in vain for soundings a vessel might strike; that there were instances of vessels going on shore in fine weather, and vessels were often seen passing unconscious of danger; that sometimes the fog cleared away for a time,—in all which cases a lighthouse might be of service, and that if only one considerable wreck was prevented in three or four years, it would be worth the expense.

This qualified recommendation did not encourage the project, and nothing was done till 1873, when the Dominion government erected two powerful lights, one on each end of the island, at a cost of \$80,000. At the west end the sea encroached so much on the land that in 1883 it became necessary to remove it a mile farther east. Here, however, it had no rest, for the sea continued to advance, so that in 1888 it became necessary to rebuild it two miles further east, where it is at present, but ere long it must again be removed.

These lighthouses are thus described by the department of marine:

"West end lighthouse, lat. $43^{\circ} 57' N.$, long. $60^{\circ} 8' W.$ A revolving white light, giving three flashes at intervals of half a minute, then a cessation of light during one and a-half minutes, visible 17 miles. White octagonal tower, 98 feet high."

The longitude here given is that which Capt. Orlebar's surveys assign to the west point, but the lighthouse is now some miles east of where the point then was.

"East end lighthouse, one and a-half miles from east end, lat. $43^{\circ} 58' 30'' N.$, long. $59^{\circ} 46' W.$ Fixed white dioptric light, second order, visible 18 miles, 128 feet high. Octagonal building, white and brown alternately, height 86 feet."

It will be seen that these are magnificent structures. They serve as a house of refuge, a flagstaff, a lookout, and, glistening in the sun, they are useful as a day beacon, as well as a light by night. To some extent, however, their usefulness is still a question. Taking the fourteen years after 1873, the year in which they were built, 1874 to 1887, we find the number of wrecks the same as in the fourteen years previous, 1859 to 1872. From the increase of commerce we might have expected an increase of wrecks, but, on the other hand, from the improvements in navigation or the great advancement in knowledge and education among navigators, their number ought to have diminished. The fact that they are so nearly equal would seem to indicate that the lighthouses have had little effect one way or other.

Steam fog-whistles were also established at each lighthouse station, but with the roar of the surf it was found that they could not be heard at a distance sufficient to warn vessels of their danger, owing to the bars running out so far, and they were discontinued some years ago. It was then proposed to place an automatic whistling buoy near the end of the east bar, but the project was found to be encompassed with such difficulties that it was abandoned.

There are now altogether five stations. 1. The main station, about four miles from the west end, where the superintendent and six men reside. Here are a set of buildings such as we have formerly described. Here are kept metallic lifeboats, with a complete rocket apparatus, such as is used by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution of Great Britain, in the use of which the men are drilled from time to time. 2. The west end lighthouse, where reside the keeper and his assistant. 3. The central station, about the middle of the island, where is a flagstaff and two boatmen. 4. The station at the foot of the lake, where is a flagstaff, and where two boatmen reside. And, 5, the east end lighthouse, where reside the

lighthouse keeper, his assistant and two boatmen. Here is a lifeboat. There are usually two or three extra men. The whole staff consists thus of about eighteen men, beside the superintendent. With their families, the number of souls resident is usually between forty-five and fifty. These stations are now all connected by telephone.

In maintaining communication with the island, one of the saddest losses occurred in the year 1870 that has happened since the formation of the establishment. On the 28th September the schooner "Ocean Traveller," Capt. O'Bryan, sailed from Halifax with supplies for the island. The weather was so stormy that she was not able to reach it, and returned on the 8th October. The weather moderating, she resumed her voyage, and on the 18th landed cattle and supplies, and immediately left, taking with her, beside her crew of nine men, a son of one of the staff on the island. But she was never heard of more. Communication is now maintained chiefly by the government steamers, which, of course, are more regular and certain. Several times the question of establishing a connection of the island with the mainland by telegraph has been discussed, but nothing has yet been done in the matter. Of late attempts have been made to establish communication by means of carrier pigeons. These have been partially successful. One sent from the island, picked up by a sailing vessel and forwarded to Halifax, brought intelligence of a wreck which otherwise would not have been heard of for probably two months.

The annual expense to the Dominion government for the maintenance of the establishment is about \$5,000, and we need not say that none of its money is spent on a worthier object.

VIII. PHYSICAL HISTORY OF THE ISLAND AND ITS PROBABLE FUTURE.

The geological history and structure of this island is not positively known. But there is reason to believe that the series of banks, of one of which Sable island forms the summit, are based on an ancient ridge of rock parallel to the shore. This could only be ascertained by deep boring, and it would be of interest to science that such should be undertaken. We confine our attention to the physical changes which the island has undergone within the historic period, particularly as bearing upon its probable future. The facts on this subject have been so industriously collected by Mr. S. D. McDonald, that we shall do little more than present the information given in his paper.¹

On the early charts of our coast compiled and corrected from those of the French, and published in 1775, the island is represented as lying between $60^{\circ} 05'$ and $60^{\circ} 45'$ west long., or as forty miles in length and two and one-quarter in breadth. In 1799 a special survey of the island was ordered by the admiralty. It was very elaborate and complete, the chart representing five hundred soundings round the island. This resulted in locating the island between $60^{\circ} 01'$ and $60^{\circ} 32'$ west long., its length being only thirty-one miles and its breadth two miles. This would show a decrease of nine miles. It represents the west end as thirteen miles farther east and the east end as four miles farther in the same direction than did the older chart. This difference may be owing in part to imperfect observations, but there can be no doubt that in the intervening period a material diminution of its area had taken place.

A survey of the island proper was made in the year 1808 by order of Sir George Prevost, then governor of Nova Scotia, by Lieut. Burton. He reported it as thirty miles in

¹ "Proceedings of N. S. Institute of Science," vi., 265.

length by two in breadth, with hills from one hundred and fifty to two hundred feet in height, beginning at the west end and attaining their greatest elevation at Mount Knight, its eastern extremity.

Another chart, issued about the year 1815, represents the island as between $60^{\circ} 03'$ and $60^{\circ} 32'$ west long., or twenty-nine miles in length, being two miles less than by the chart of 1799. In the year 1829 Capt. Darby, in command of the vessel employed by government to visit the island, prepared a chart from observations of his own, which represents the island as only twenty-two miles in length.

Hon. Joseph Howe visited the island in 1850 for the purpose of making himself personally acquainted with it and examining into its requirements. In his report to parliament he called attention to the fact that, by actual measurement, it had diminished at the west end in thirty years to the extent of about eleven miles. He also urged the importance of having its position determined, as the old chart by which Capt. Darby was supposed to be guided and one drawn up by himself showed a difference of not less than twenty-two miles in the location of the west point. This involved a serious danger to navigators. On Mr. Howe's report the admiral was communicated with, who immediately ordered Commander Bayfield and staff to make a new survey of the island. In the following year he issued a corrected chart, showing the island as lying between $50^{\circ} 45''$ and $60^{\circ} 08''$ west longitude, thus showing the west end to be two miles farther east than by Darby's plan.

This evidence of the wasting of the island is confirmed by the testimony of those who have resided upon the island. When the establishment was founded, in 1801, the site selected for the main station was one remarkably well sheltered by sand-hills, and situated five miles from the west end. But in May, 1814, Mr. Hodgson, the superintendent, writes: "As the west end of the island is all washing away, I expect in the course of two or three years that the house will be washed away, if it goes away as fast as it has done the last six months. In course of four years it has washed away four miles, so that it is not above one mile from the house to the end of the land, and that terminates in a point. I think we shall have to move down to the middle house." And on the 24th July he writes that he "had pulled down all the buildings and moved to the middle building." This was about three miles farther east. But on the 5th June, 1820, he again writes: "The west end of the island is washing away so fast that it is now very near the house at west end settlement, and we shall have to remove the buildings this summer or lose them entirely." And on the 26th July he again writes that he has pulled down the west end house, and removed it to the Haul-over Ponds, a place about three miles to the east of where it formerly stood, as the ground whereon it stood had washed away.

Still the sea advanced, the two following winters being noted for the severity of the storms, each of which made inroads on the sand-cliffs at the western part of the island, and produced changes on the surface of the interior. By the year 1833 the sea had advanced so far that it was within half a mile of the buildings, and new ones were erected about four miles farther eastward. The encroachments of the sea having continued, the present site of the main station was selected, on the broadest and most protected part of the island.

Between the years 1850 and 1881 the western part of the island enjoyed comparative repose. Mr. McDonald accounts for this very naturally by the fact, that the quantities of sand carried into the sea had formed shoals to the west, on which the sea would break before reaching the cliffs, and thus its abrading force be diminished. In the same way the

bars parallel to the shore serve as barrier-reefs to at least retard the process of destruction. But as the currents removed the surface of the shoals to the westward, the sea resumed its attacks upon the land.

The winter of 1881 was marked by a succession of gales, in which, in addition to the gradual wasting, large areas were removed bodily. During one gale an area of seventy feet by a quarter of a mile was removed bodily, and a month later thirty feet of the whole width of the island disappeared in a few hours. The year 1882 was worse. Early in February occurred a gale of unusual violence, accompanied with high tides. Already the sea had removed the embankment to within forty feet of a bluff on which the lighthouse keeper's barn stood, and in dangerous proximity to the lighthouse itself, which had originally been built a mile inside of some grass-hills, which were supposed to be in some measure a protection from the inroads of the sea. All hands were called out, ready for any emergency. The cattle were removed to the porch of the lighthouse. As the staff were watching the force of the waves that were now undermining the embankment with great rapidity, suddenly there was a depression in the margin of the cliff, and the next instant an area equal to forty-eight feet broad and a quarter of a mile long descended into the surges on the north side, while during the night forty feet in front of the barn and along the sand-bluff disappeared, and next morning the barn itself went crashing over, and was carried away by the waves.

The sea was now within twelve feet of the lighthouse itself, a magnificent structure, built in 1873 at an expense of \$40,000. This did not stand long. There had been two days of unusually quiet weather, during which a heavy ground swell set in from the southeast (probably from a gale passing along the gulf stream), which removed the whole embankment, causing the lighthouse to lean dangerously forward. The immediate removal of the apparatus became necessary, and from that time it ceased to cast its light over the waves.

It was again erected about a mile further east, but the sea continued to advance, so that in 1888 it was found necessary to remove it two miles farther east.

The storms that produce the most destruction are those from the southeast. The heavy seas which they bring in strike obliquely on the south shore, and, aided by the strong current setting to the westward, undermine the sand-cliffs, till great masses are detached, and, falling into the water, are carried forward and help to prolong the northwest bar. But even in calm weather, when the sea is still, there is a ground swell, rendering landing precarious, which makes the shores and bars white with foam, and which exercises a strong wasting power, as evidenced by the destruction of the lighthouse as just mentioned.

The changes going on in the physical structure of the island appear further from what has taken place in the lake. Some time before the first government establishment was placed on the island there was an opening into it from the north. The superintendent, writing in 1808, says that "it is completely shut, and it is difficult to trace where it has been." The superintendent in 1826 mentions the same fact, but urges the reopening of it, which he thinks might be accomplished at moderate expense, in which case it would serve as a harbour of refuge for vessels of fifty tons. Some years after a terrific storm caused a similar opening from the south, through which small vessels entered for shelter, but in the year 1836 a similar storm filled it up again, inclosing two American vessels which had taken refuge within.

For some time after the formation of the government establishment on the island this lake was fifteen miles long, and, though gradually becoming shoal from the material drifting into it, it afforded a very convenient means of transport by boat. The residents largely used it in conveying supplies to the east end, in bringing wood from the same quarter, and wrecked materials to the main station. But during the winter of 1881 a severe gale opened a gulch near the east end, which has so drained it that it is now only eight miles long, and so shallow as to be useless for transport.

The destructive agency of the sea appears farther in the ridge which separates the lake from the sea on the south. Originally it was half a mile wide, with hills upwards of fifty feet in height, now it is a narrow beach in some places not more than a hundred yards wide and so reduced in height that the sea breaks over it in stormy weather. Should this barrier be removed, the work of demolition will go on more rapidly than ever.

But the sea is not the only agency that is producing changes on the surface of this island. At ordinary times a brisk west wind is almost as constant as the trade winds, which must be continually shifting the particles of sand eastward. This may account to a large extent for the diminished height of the island. The first superintendent, soon after his arrival in 1801, estimated one hill at the east end to be two hundred feet high, and others one hundred and fifty feet, but there is now none over eighty. While this regular process is going on, there is a more irregular but violent action, often more noticeable, by the storms. At one place they will scoop out the loose sand, when not confined by the roots of the grass, into bowl-like hollows, which afterward form those fresh-water ponds so frequent. Hence it requires great vigilance at the stations to guard against any breach in the sod and repair it in time, otherwise the foundations of the buildings would be overturned. Again, they will heap the sand in hummocks, and at another remove them entirely; while again they will spread a covering of sand over a large part of the land in the interior. In such a storm, in 1816, hills that had formed landmarks were carried into the ocean, and as high elevations formed in other places. Thousands of tons of sand were carried from both sides into the interior, so covering the mowing-grounds connected with the establishment as to threaten the loss of their stock. In other parts of the island such was the destruction of vegetation that multitudes of horses perished for want of food. Recent wrecks disappeared, and others, entirely unknown, were brought to view.

But still, with the prevailing winds, the eastward motion must be important, and it is supposed that the whole island has been moving in that direction, and thus might be carried over the edge of the bank, unless, as is supposed by some, the whole bank is moving eastward. In this way they would account for the difference of longitude of the island in ancient charts and as determined by modern surveys. While there must be this movement eastward, it is not enough to account for the whole changes described, and the facts abundantly show a wasting of the island and the submergence of its materials.

While such changes are going on upon the island, similar processes are going on amid the shoals and bars which surround it, though, from their being submerged, it is more difficult to trace them. But an eastward movement is apparent. Capt. Darby, writing in 1832, says that he had known the island for twenty-eight years, that during that time the west end had decreased seven miles, but the outer breakers of the northwest bar had the same bearings from the west point.

While this destruction is going on at the west end, the motion of the sand eastward by the wind may be making land in that direction. The old charts place the east-end considerably farther west than the modern ones do. Probably this is not altogether the result of imperfect observations. At all events, residents have noted the increase of land at certain points, though we have no particular statement of its extent. But it must be far from equalling the destruction manifested by the facts already adduced. Another important fact must be noticed, the prolongation and shoaling of the northeast bar. Most of the shipwrecks of late have occurred here, some of them sixteen miles from the east end lighthouse.

From these facts the prospects of the island may be spoken of as really ominous. From what has taken place within the recorded period, it seems absolutely certain that the whole island will disappear, and that, even speaking according to time as measured by human life, at no distant period. What then? If its deep foundations could be uprooted or sunk in the fathomless depths of the ocean, we might rejoice. But, alas! the removal of the land would be to leave for a lengthened period only shoals and sand-banks, such as the present bars exhibit, more fatal to vessels and lives than the island itself can be now. When that happens there will be no humane establishment to receive wrecked mariners reaching land, indeed there will be no land to reach. Instead of vessels being imbedded in the sand of the beach, they will strike on the sands to be engulfed in the pitiless sea, where no human aid can reach them. What preventive measures can be adopted? The erection of beacons, as on the Goodwin sands, is the only one we can conceive, but the placing them there so as to resist the power of sea and storm will be, to say the least, a work of immense difficulty, I am inclined to think, one which will at least equal the greatest works which human hands have hitherto accomplished. It may be too soon yet to think of preparations for such a contingency, but, in a scientific point of view, it would be a matter of great interest and value to sink a bore-hole down to the underlying rock, both to ascertain the nature of it and the depth at which it may be reached. At the same time this would be of immense importance when the time comes, that government will have to consider the question of what can be done to save property and life from what will then be only treacherous quicksands, covered by a landless and insatiable sea.

APPENDIX A.

(See foot-note, page 11.)

THE FOLLOWING WAS RECEIVED TOO LATE FOR INSERTION IN TEXT:

Of the destruction of these cattle by the Acadians, we have another notice in a letter by Bishop Saint Vallier, written in 1686 after a visit to Acadia. After describing Beaubassin, he says: "About ten years ago the first Frenchmen came to this place from Port Royal. In the beginning they were obliged to live chiefly on herbs. At present they are in more easy circumstances, and as there is an abundance of pasturage in the vicinity, they have let loose a number of cows and other animals, which they brought from Sable Island, where the late Commandant de Razilly had formerly left them, they had become almost wild, and could only be approached with difficulty; but they are becoming tame little by little, and are of great advantage to each family, who can easily have a good number of them." The Bishop was no doubt mistaken in supposing the cattle to have been placed on the island by Razilly, as there is evidence of their having been there before his time.

APPENDIX B.

SUPERINTENDENTS.

1801-9, James Morris; 1809-1830, Edward Hodgson; 1830-1848, Joseph Darby; 1848-1855, M. D. McKenna; 1855-1873, Philip Dodd; 1873-1884, D. McDonald; 1884, 7 months, J. H. Garroway, acting; 1884, R. J. Boutillier.

APPENDIX C.

LIST OF KNOWN WRECKS ON SABLE ISLAND SINCE THE FOUNDED OF THE GOVERNMENT RELIEF ESTABLISHMENT, DECEMBER, 1801.

1801-1809, JAMES MORRIS, SUPERINTENDENT.

1802, ship Union, ship Packet; 1803, ship Hannah and Eliza, brig Harriot; 1804, ship Stark Odder; 1805, two schooners; 1806, two schooners; 1807, brig Spring, brig John and Mary; 1808, a schooner, an American fishing schooner; 1809, brig Prince Edward, an American fishing schooner.

1809-1830, EDWARD HODGSON, SUPERINTENDENT.

1810, brig lost, schooner lost; 1811, schooner Fortune, brig Hard Times, brig Orion; 1812, H. B. M. frigate Barbadoes, with a schooner and sloop under convoy; 1813, an American fishing schooner; 1814, an American fishing schooner, a schooner belonging to Halifax; 1815, brig Adamant, wreck of ship Demoscota seen; 1819, a fishing schooner from France, schooner Trafalgar, schooner Industry; 1819, schooner Juno, a fishing vessel from Plymouth; 1820, brig from Quebec, schooner commanded by Capt. Harvey; 1822, H. M. C. M. frigate L'Africaine; 1823, brig Hope, brig Marshal Wellington, H. B. M. packet Frolic beat over; 1824, brig James; 1825, brig Nassau, brig Traveler; 1826, ship Nassau, ship Elizabeth, schooner Brothers; 1827, ship Agamemnon, ship Echo, schooner Four Sons; 1828, ship Melrose, ship Franklin, brig Adelphi; 1829, brig Hannah, brig Jamaica, brig Pegasus, ship Courser.

1831-1848, JOSEPH DARBY, SUPERINTENDENT.

1831, schooner Meridian, brig Mary Porter, brig Orpheus; 1832, ship Tottenham, got off again, brig Floyd, brig Joanna, brig Ruby; 1833, schooner Margaretta; 1834, brig Tantivy, brig J. H. Albony; 1835, ship Eagle (of New York), schooner Laban, schooner Ann, brig Abigail; 1836, brig Lancaster, brig Sun, galliot Johanna; 1837, brig Bob Logie; 1838, ship Granville; 1839, ship Maria; 1840, schooners Barbara, Senator, Blooming Youth, ships Myrtle, Glasgow, Eliza, Australia; 1841, ships Undaunted, Marmora, Mersey, brigs Triumph, Isabella; 1842, schooner Louisa; 1843, ship Eagle; 1845, ship Eagle (of St. John's); 1846, brig Afghanistan, barque Detroit, schooner Arno, schooner Lady Elcho, ship Milo; 1847, ship Levant; 1848, schooner Fulton, Spanish schooner Bella Maria.

1848-1855, M. D. McKENNA, SUPERINTENDENT.

- 1849—July 22.—Schooner Brothers of St. John, N. B., from Cumberland, N. S., bound for Liverpool, G. B. loaded with timber, deals and treenails.
 August 27.—Barque Blonde of Montreal, 676 tons, from Quebec for Greenock, timber laden, was run ashore in consequence of her condition.
 December 17.—Brig Growler, of and for St. John's, N. F., from Baltimore, loaded with corn, flour, tobacco, pork, etc.
 1850—April 2.—Schooner Transit of Prince Edward Island, from St. John's for Boston, loaded with fish, wine, oil, raisins and hides.
 July 6.—Ship Adonis, of and from Portland, 538 tons, bound into the River St. Lawrence, in ballast.
 August 3.—Brigantine Hope, of and from Baltimore, bound for St. John's, N. F., 205 tons, loaded with flour, meal and pork.
 September 4.—Barque Margaret Walker of Halifax, from St. John, N. B., 318 tons, for Liverpool, loaded with deals.
 1851—February 11.—Brig Science of St. John's, N. F., 143 tons, from Matanzas for St. John's, with cargo of molasses.
 April 9.—Brig Gustave I., 271 tons, of and for Antwerp from Havana, loaded with sugar, honey, tobacco, etc.
 August 26.—Schooner Vampire of Ragged Islands.
 August 26.—Barque Margaret Dewar of Windsor, N. S., from Glasgow for New York, loaded with pig and scrap iron, wine, whiskey, etc.
 September 13.—Ship Hargreave of New York, from Newport, G. B., for New York, loaded with railroad iron.
 December 4.—Schooner Star of Hope of New London drifted to the island.
 1852—September 14.—Schooner Novara, of and from Marblehead, on a fishing voyage.
 November 21.—Brigantine Ottoman, of and from St. John's, N. F., for Boston, with cargo of dry and pickled fish and oil.
 December 16.—Schooner Marie Anne of St. André, Quebec, from Placentia Bay for Halifax, with cargo of cod-fish. One man lost.
 December 18.—Ranger of Pictou drifted ashore.
 1853—June 1.—Ship Amazon of Hull, 600 tons, from Shields for New York, with cargo of coals.
 July 28.—Schooner Guide of London, 132 tons, from New York for Labrador, with cargo of flour, beef, pork, molasses, etc.
 1854—May 5.—Brig East Boston of Pictou, from Catania, Sicily, with cargo of sulphur, sumac, rags and oranges.

¹ There seems an "Eagle" too many here.

- 1854—June 20.—Schooner *Estrella* of Oporto, from Lisbon for Halifax, with a cargo of salt, corks and corkwood.
 October 21.—Schooner *Maskonomet*, of and from Marblehead, from a fishing voyage on the banks.
 November 20.—Ship *Arcadia* of Warren, Maine, 715 tons, from Antwerp for New York, with cargo of glass, lead, iron, silks, etc.; 147 passengers.
- 1855—January 18.—Brig *Nisibis*, of and for St. John's, N. F., 152 tons, from New York, with cargo of flour, cornmeal, corn, pork, sugar, etc.
 April 18.—Schooner *Albatross* of Kingston, Jamaica, from New York for St. John's, N. F., with a cargo of beef, pork, flour, etc.
- 1855-1873, P. S. DODD, SUPERINTENDENT.
- 1855—December 7.—Schooner *Primrose*, Capt. Myers, of Pope's Harbour, from St. John's, N. F., for Halifax.
 1856—June 2.—American ketch *Commerce*, Capt. Hinckley, from Italy to New York. Discharged cargo and was got off.
 September 23.—American brigantine *Alma*, Capt. York, from New York for St. John's, N. F.
 December 7.—Schooner *Eliza Ross*, Capt. Muggah, of and from Sydney, C. B., drifted down the south side of the island, dismasted, out of water, and decks swept. All hands saved in the lifeboat *Victoria*.
 1858—March.—Brigantine *Maury*, Capt. LeBlanc, of Lahave, from Harbour Grace for Boston.
 October 3.—Brigantine *Lark*, Capt. Pike, of and from St. John's, N. F., for Prince Edward Island.
 1860—September 10.—American brigantine *Argo*, Capt. Auld, from Boston for Lingan, C. B.
 1862—May 7.—American barque *Zone*, Capt. Fullarton, from Shields, G. B., for Boston, struck on the south side of the northeast bar during the night, and broke up immediately. All hands were lost but one Russian Finlander, John Yanderson, who was saved by slipping his hand through a ring-bolt on one of the deck planks, and washed ashore. Crew thirteen all told.
 August 1.—Barque *Jane Lovitt*, Capt. Uttler, of Yarmouth, from St. John, N. B., for Cork.
 1863—July 22.—Brig *Gordon*, Capt. Fitzgerald, of St. John, N. B., from St. Andrews, N. B., for Wales.
 August 4.—Steamer *Georgia*, Capt. Gladell, from Liverpool, N. S.
 1864—February.—Schooner *Weathergaze*, Capt. McCuish, from Boston for Bacallien, N. F.
 March 8.—American schooner *Langdon Gillmore*, Capt. Chase, from St. John's, N. F., for New York. Captain and two men drowned. Four men got ashore in the ship's boat, the rest taken off in the lifeboat.
 April 12.—Brigantine *Dash*, Capt. Coles, of and for St. John's, N. F., from Cienfuegos.
 December 20.—Brigantine *Wm. Bennet*, Capt. E. Bennett, of St. John, N. B., from Prince Edward Island for New York. Captain, crew and passengers, the captain's wife, sister-in-law, and infant three months old all saved by a line. But in the little graveyard of the island are two wooden headboards, one with the inscription, "Sacred to the memory of Henry J. Osborn, who died December 20th, 1864, while saving passengers and crew of the brig *Wm. Bennet*; aged 37 years;" and the other, not so legible, but of similar purport, regarding another, the name apparently being Peter Day.
 1865—Brigantine *Triumph*, Capt. Wood, of and for St. John's, N. F., from Figuera, Portugal.
 May 12.—Ship *Malakhoff*, Capt. Harris, from Hull for Halifax.
 1866—February 25.—French packet *Stella Maria*, Capt. Gauthier, from St. Pierre for Halifax, struck on the northwest bar; floated off during the night.
 June.—Brigantine *Stranger*, Capt. Campbell, from New York for Pictou.
 July.—Steamship *Ephesus*, Capt. Collins, of Liverpool, G. B., from Norfolk, Virginia, for Liverpool.
 August 16.—Barque *Ada York*, Capt. York, of Portland, from New Orleans for Liverpool, G. B., loaded with cotton.
 August 24.—Barque *Bessie Campbell*, Capt. Lent, of Plymouth, from Newport, G. B., for Portland, Me., struck on the island, and being found to be leaking was run ashore, but afterwards got off.
 1867—August.—Ship *Rhea Sylvia*, Capt. Roach, of Bristol, G. B., from St. Vincent, Cape de Verd Islands, for St. John, N. B.
 1868—January.—Schooner *Malta*, Capt. McDonald, of Annapolis, from St. John's, N. F., for Boston.
 June 28.—Schooner *S. H. Cameron*, Capt. McDonald, of Southport, Me., from Banquereau Bank with fish, bound home.
 1870—February 24.—Barque *E. Robbins*, Capt. Hilton, loaded with peas. The first mate, Andrew Dunn, and one of the sailors, name unknown, washed off the wreck during the night; the rest of the crew saved by a line.
 May 2.—Brig *Electo*, Capt. Finlayson, of Charlottetown, P. E. I., from Liverpool, G. B., for Halifax, with a cargo of salt and coal.
 Brig *Acton*.
 1871—November.—Brigantine *Black Duck*, Capt. Landry, of and from Quebec for Bermuda.
 1872—Schooner *Boys of Gloucester*, Mass.
 1873—March.—Schooner *Stella Maria* of St. Pierre-Miquelon.
 June.—Schooner *Laura R. Burnham* of Gloucester, Mass.
 September 15.—Steamship *Wyoming* of the Guion line, Capt. Morgan, from Liverpool to New York, touched on the north-east bar; got off after throwing overboard \$20,000 worth of cargo. Sent a boat's crew ashore for assistance, but sailed away, leaving them on the island.

- 1873—September 25.—Barque Humbelton, Capt. Soreignson, of Sunderland, from London for New York.
November 9.—Schooner Zephyr of St. Pierre came ashore, with four dead bodies on board.

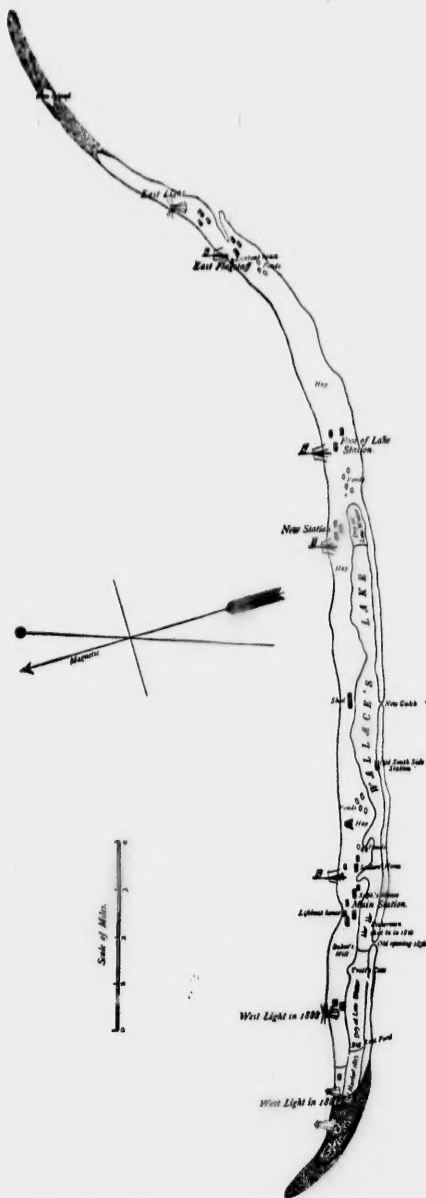
1874-1884, D. McDONALD, SUPERINTENDENT.

- 1874—May 20.—Barque Gladstone, Capt. Nelson, of Stavanger, Norway, for New York.
July 6.—Barque Highlander, Capt. Hutchinson, of Sunderland, for St. John, N. B.
July 20.—Steamship Tyrian, from Glasgow for Halifax, struck but got off, and proceeded on her voyage.
July 28.—Barque Nashwaak, Capt. LeBlanc, from St. John, N. B., for Ayr, G. B., timber laden.
1875—Farto, Capt. Jose Gomez de Sylva Lampais, of Lisbon, for Halifax, went to pieces at once. The captain, cook and steward lost, the rest, numbering eight, saved.
Ship Ironsides, Capt. Shedden, from Great Britain to New York.
1876—April 15.—American ship Neptune, Capt. Spence, from Liverpool, G. B., for New York. One man drowned.
June 23.—Barque Norma, Capt. Saunders, from St. John, N. B., for Great Britain.
October 16.—American schooner Reeves struck on the northwest bar in a violent gale; all hands lost.
1878—August 22.—Barque Emma, Capt. Anderson, of Christiansand, Norway, from Great Britain to Philadelphia.
1879—March 31.—Barque Oriental, Capt. Corning, of Quebec, from Philadelphia for Queenstown, laden with corn.
April.—Schooner Peasley, abandoned, drifted on northwest bar.
July 12.—Steamship State of Virginia, of State line, Capt. Moodie, from New York for Glasgow. The lifeboat succeeded in landing one load of passengers, but upset with second load, when nine were drowned.
1880—June 3.—Ship Gondoller, Capt. Atkins, of Prince Edward Island, from Holland for New York. Three men drowned in the surf while attempting to land from the ship's boat.
November 22.—Schooner Bride of Bay Chaleur; the crew of three saved, exhausted and frostbitten.
1881—October 3.—Schooner Lord Bury, Capt. Power, of Cape Breton.
1882—March 1.—Brigantine Williams, Capt. Warren, of Prince Edward Island, from Barrow, G. B., for Halifax.
Had been in the ice off Newfoundland. Provisions exhausted and all hands in a starving condition.
July 4.—Norwegian barque Yorkshire, Capt. Jacobson, from Barbados for Montreal. Two men lost.
August 12.—Norwegian barque Balgoley, Capt. Uglant, for New York, in ballast.
1883—August.—Barque Britannia, Capt. Glaston, from West Indies for Montreal. Captain's wife and six children, with six of the crew, lost. Captain and three men taken off a raft.
1884—July.—Steamship Amsterdam, Capt. Luce, of Amsterdam, from Rotterdam for New York, with 267 persons on board, passengers and crew. Three drowned in the surf while attempting to land in the ship's boats.

1884-1894, R. J. BOUTILIER, SUPERINTENDENT.

- 1884—December 19.—Brigantine A. S. H., Capt. LeMarchand, of St. Malo, France, from St. Pierre for Boston, with fish. The captain, mate and steward succeeded in getting ashore. Mate managed with great difficulty to get to the west light through a blinding snowstorm, but the captain and second mate perished before they could be found. The French government presented William Merson with a silver medal and diploma of the first class, and the superintendent a gold medal and diploma of the second class, for services rendered in connection with this wreck.
1885—May 20.—Schooner Cora May, of and from Provincetown, Mass., bound for the Grand Banks.
1886—September 18.—Barque Olinda, Capt. Kendrick, of St. John's, N. F., from Pernambuco for Sydney, C. B., in ballast.
1889—Norwegian barque Faerder, Capt. Larsen, from Great Britain for Halifax, with coal.
1890—July 27.—Brigantine Gerda, Capt. K. F. Olsen, of Drammen, Norway, from Barbados for Quebec, with molasses and sugar.
1892—May 12.—Barque Henry, Capt. Jacobsen, of and from Tonsberg, Norway, in ballast. Six sailors left her in the long boat and boarded a fishing schooner, which landed them the next morning near the east light. On that morning the wreck broke up, and the captain, mate, carpenter, cook and two boys were drowned. The captain would not abandon the vessel while there remained a chance of getting her off. He remained so long that rescue was impossible.
December.—Schooner Bridget Ann, Capt. White, from Margaree for Halifax.
American brigantine Kaluna of New York, Capt. J. H. Nelson, from St. John, N. B., for Buenos Ayres, ran ashore, partially dismantled and waterlogged.
1893—April 27.—Inglewood, Capt. Seely, for Halifax from Cow Bay.
August.—Valkyrie, Capt. Hoar, from Cape Breton for Delaware.
1894—January 12.—Schooner R. J. Edwards, Capt. Bibber, of Gloucester, Mass., lost with all on board.
July 30.—Barque Nicosia, Capt. Cole, of St. John, N. B., 1047 tons, from Dublin, in ballast.
September 11.—Steamer Nerito, of and from Sunderland, for Hampton Roads.

The above list, being drawn up by successive superintendents, may be regarded as complete or very nearly so. But in the earlier years the instances in which vessels that struck were got off are not mentioned. From 1848 all the cases in which lives were lost are noted.



SABLE ISLAND.
FROM MAP PUBLISHED BY DEPARTMENT OF MARINE OF CANADA.